Foreign Broadcast Information Service

50 ANNIVERSARY 1941 - 1991

# Daily Report

# Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-91-102
Tuesday
28 May 1991

# Daily Report
## Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-91-102 28 May 1991

CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.


**INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

**Palestinian Affairs**

'Arafat on Resumption of Terrorism, Intifadah *[Vienna DIE PRESSE 25-26 May]* ..... 1

**ARAB AFRICA**

**Algeria**

French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas Begins Visit ..... 2
Arrives for Talks *[Algiers Radio]* ..... 2
Dumas on Israel, Settlements *[Paris International]* ..... 2
Ghozali, Dumas Open Talks *[APS]* ..... 2
Bendjedid Receives Dumas *[Algiers Radio]* ..... 2
Dumas Interviewed *[Algiers Radio]* ..... 2
Discusses Mediterranean Issues *[Paris International]* ..... 4
Dumas Cited on Maghreb *[Algiers Radio]* ..... 4
Dumas Interviewed, Departs *[Algiers Radio]* ..... 5
Hamrouche Greets King Hasan II at Moroccan Border *[Algiers Radio]* ..... 5
Hamrouche Says Nuclear Bomb Not Needed at Present *[APS]* ..... 5

**Tunisia**

France's Dumas Describes Talks With Ben Yahya *[Tunis Radio]* ..... 6
Ben Ali Talks with France's Dumas *[Tunis Radio]* ..... 6
Holds News Conference, Departs *[Tunis Radio]* ..... 7

**ARABIAN PENINSULA**

**Kuwait**

Prime Minister Stresses Security, Protection *[KUNA]* ..... 8
Council of Ministers Extends Martial Law 1 Month *[Radio Kuwait]* ..... 9
Hearing of 12 Collaboration Cases Postponed *[Radio Kuwait]* ..... 9

**Saudi Arabia**

Joint Forces Chief on Threat From Iraq *[London AL-HAWADITH 24 May]* ..... 9

**Yemen**

Aden Reports Arrival of Ethiopian Naval Units *[Aden Radio]* ..... 10

**ISRAEL**

Minister Complains U.S. Behaving 'Ruthlessly' *[IDF Radio]* ..... 11
U.S. Praised for Assistance to Ethiopian Jews *[Jerusalem TV]* ..... 11
No Negotiations Under Way for POW's in Lebanon *[Jerusalem TV]* ..... 11
Ben-Aharon on Government Settlement Policy *[GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE]* ..... 11

**LEBANON**

Minister Views Israeli Stand on Treaty With Syria *[RFL]* ..... 14
Israeli, SLA Activities in South Reported ..... 14
SLA-Nasirite Clashes *[VOL]* ..... 14
Israeli Shelling, No Casualties *[Beirut Radio]* ..... 14
Attacks Continue *[Beirut Radio]* ..... 14
Reinforcements, Other Actions *[Voice of the People]* ..... 14
Helicopters Overfly Tyre *[Beirut Radio]* ..... 14
Said Expanding Presence *[VOL]* ..... 14
Shelling, Tank Reinforcements *[VOM]* ..... 15
Islamic Resistance Activities Reported *[VOM]* ..... 15
Army Commander Discusses Deployment to South *[Beirut Radio]* ..... 15
Hizballah, Al-Musawi Comment on POW Initiative ..... 15

Al-Musawi Stand Clarified *[Beirut Radio]* ..... 15
Hizballah Denies TIMES Report *[VOM]* ..... 15
Al-Musawi Comments *[VOL]* ..... 15
Interviewed on POW Exchange *[Voice of the People]* ..... 16
Says Western Hostages Not Held *[Voice of the Oppressed]* ..... 16
Chamber of Deputies Endorses Treaty With Syria *[RFL]* ..... 16

**SYRIA**

Kuwaiti Defense Minister on Official Visit ..... 17
Speaks on Arab Force *[KUNA]* ..... 17
Received by Al-Asad, Talas *[Damascus TV]* ..... 17
Kuwaiti Defense Minister Speaks at Damascus Airport *[Radio Kuwait]* ..... 17
Official Talks With PLO Delegation Begin ..... 17
Talks Previewed *[Algiers Radio]* ..... 17
Talks Open 26 May *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* ..... 18
Al-Shar', PLO Discuss Peace Efforts *[Damascus Radio]* ..... 18
Evening Session Held *[Damascus Radio]* ..... 18
Qaddumi Meets PNSF's Al-Fahum *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* ..... 18
Al-Asad, Khaddam Meet Qaddumi *[Damascus Radio]* ..... 19
People's Assembly Endorses Treaty With Lebanon *[Damascus Radio]* ..... 19

**SOUTH ASIA**

**Afghanistan**

Najibullah Addresses Nation on UN Statement *[Kabul Radio]* ..... 20

**India**

Cremation of Rajiv Gandhi in 24 May Ceremony *[Delhi Radio]* ..... 22
Detained Tamil Believed Linked To Gandhi Killing *[AFP]* ..... 22
Further on Tamil *[AFP]* ..... 23
Sri Lankan Woman Detained *[AFP]* ..... 23
LTTE Says Envoy Met Gandhi *[AFP]* ..... 24
Supreme Court Judge To Head Gandhi Death Probe *[Delhi Radio]* ..... 25
Videocassette Seized *[Delhi Radio]* ..... 25
Tamil Nadu Finds No Gap in Gandhi Security *[Delhi Radio]* ..... 25
Party Demands Governor Resign *[Delhi Radio]* ..... 25
Public Outcry for Deportation of Sri Lankan Tamils *[AFP]* ..... 25
Congress-I Leaders Say Gandhi Murder 'Conspiracy' *[Delhi Radio]* ..... 26
Congress-I Warns of 'Internal Emergency' Idea *[Delhi Radio]* ..... 27
Shekhar Denies 'Emergency' Idea *[Delhi Radio]* ..... 27
Government Spokesman's Denial *[Delhi Radio]* ..... 27
Election Commission Rules Out Change in Poll Dates *[Delhi Radio]* ..... 27
Punjab Candidate Killed; Election Countermanded *[Delhi Radio]* ..... 27
More Election Candidates Shot *[Delhi Radio]* ..... 27
Visiting Iranian Official Holds Meetings *[IRNA]* ..... 28

**Iran**

Hajj Pilgrims Begin To Depart for Saudi Arabia *[Tehran Radio]* ..... 28
Velayati Interviewed on Foreign Policy *[SORUSH 18 May]* ..... 28

## Palestinian Affairs

### 'Arafat on Resumption of Terrorism, Intifadah

*AU2505143291 Vienna DIE PRESSE in German 25-26 May 91 pp 1, 2*

[Report on interview with PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by Thomas Chorherr in Tunis; date not given]

[Text] Tunis—In a DIE PRESSE interview, PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat threatened to intensify the intifadah, the revolt in the occupied territories, which has lasted for four years now, and he even threatened that terrorist attacks against airplanes would possibly be resumed. 'Arafat: "I do not know how long I can prevent my fellow countrymen from using real arms instead of stones. I do not know for how long I can prevent them from resuming hijackings, if the Palestinian problem is not solved now."

"I am not optimistic; I am not pessimistic; I am realistic." That is how Yasir 'Arafat comments on the situation following U.S. Secretary of State Baker's recent unsuccessful peace mission. His realism is based on two facts. The first fact: "We are here and we are staying here. We, the Palestinians, are the alter ego of the Israelis. They cannot flee!" The second fact, according to 'Arafat, is the Israelis' stubbornness, their refusal to yield, and their "stupidity not to take the present chance for peace."

'Arafat received me in his closely guarded headquarters in a quiet suburban street in Tunis at midnight. In a green fatigues, the inevitable kaffiyah on his head, armed with a revolver, and sitting in front of a large picture of the old part of Jerusalem, he called to me, "Welcome, welcome!" before he offered me a seat and, later on, sweets.

However, what the Palestinian had to say sharply contrasted with his friendly face and the smile of his armed bodyguards. "In 1956, Eisenhower forced the Israelis to withdraw from the Suez Canal. That is precisely the way the Americans must act now. After all, they made the Israelis refrain from striking back following the Iraqi attacks!" When he speaks with his visitor from Austria, every other word that 'Arafat says seems to be addressed at the Americans. "President Bush rejected every type of linkage between the Gulf crisis and the Palestinian problem; however, he said that this problem would be settled immediately following the liberation of Kuwait. Well, now we have reached that point!"

Then 'Arafat becomes eloquent: "Are ethics and principles nothing but empty words? Is there no implementation of UN resolutions when and if the tragedy of the Palestinians must be dealt with?" The PLO chief stresses that his position continues to be based on the theory of two states—the recognition of Israel by the Palestinians, and the creation of a Palestinian state. "That is not an 'Arafat plan; it is a plan of the Palestine National Council, the PNC!" Why can the Palestinian issue not be settled as was the Namibian problem? Generally, he sees clear parallels to southern Africa and has therefore established contacts with the front-line states.

The parallels apparently go so far as to include even terror. "The intifadah will go farther," announced 'Arafat. "So far, the revolt has been one without weapons. However, I do not know how long I can contain it. If the crimes against the Palestinians increase—and what is happening in the occupied territories must be called a crime—the intifadah may get out of control."

'Arafat stressed: "I do not know how long I can check the Palestinians if others continue their crimes!" Does that also mean acts of terror, such as hijackings? "So far, it has been possible to avoid them. However, our patience has its limits! You must consider that Palestinians have been kept in camps. There have already been 7,000 miscarriages of justice. Bush sent 500,000 men into the desert to force the implementation of UN resolutions against Iraq. How about Palestine?"

'Arafat wants to avoid bloodshed at any cost. "However, I do not know how long I will be able to do so, and how long the revolt will be unarmed. If a comprehensive armed resistance were to be put up, the Arabs would face a critical situation. But it would also be a serious blow to all Western statesmen!" Then he addresses the Austrians: "We must prevent the Balkanization of the Middle East. You know particularly well what that means!"

Granted, the Gulf crisis also led to misunderstandings between the PLO and some Arab governments, says 'Arafat. It is important now to restore unity. "We wanted to achieve an internal Arab peaceful solution to the conflict. However, the drums of war were stronger. What is more, the Americans were opposed to it. Bush has become the hero of the Gulf war. However, he is not yet the hero of peace! He will become such hero if he succeeds in making the Israelis withdraw!"

But why did the Palestinians cheer every Scud missile that went to Israel? Hasn't this partisan attitude damaged many opportunities? "Whenever 'Arafat was attacked, there were similar cheers in the West—most of all in the United States," said 'Arafat. "The dust will settle!"

At the end of our interview, he has a message for Austria: "It is a friendly country. We thank the Austrian people, their political parties, their government, and their president for having supported our cause. We will not forget the role that Austria played at the United Nations when the resolutions on Palestine were adopted. In addition, Austria has increased its aid for Palestine. We are very grateful. Our people never forget!"

## Algeria

### French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas Begins Visit

#### Arrives for Talks

*LD2405212591 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 18:30 GMT 24 May 91*

[Excerpt] French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas arrived in Algiers this afternoon on a 24-hour visit. Dumas is to hold talks this evening with his Algerian counterpart, Sid Ahmed Ghozali, in a tete a tete meeting. The talks will then be enlarged at a working ("session) which will be attended by Economy Minister Ghazi Hidouci, Industry Minister Sadek Boussena [title as received]. Social Affairs minister Mohamed Ghrib, and Dr. Djamal Ould Abbas, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Commission at the National People's Assembly.

It is expected that the French foreign minister will be received tomorrow by Algerian President Mr. Chadli Bendjedid and Prime Minister Mr. Mouloud Hamrouche. The talks between the two countries at this level are the first of their kind since last January. [passage omitted]

#### Dumas on Israel, Settlements

*LD2405204191 Paris Radio France International in French 1800 GMT 24 May 91*

[Text] Roland Dumas continues his tour of the Maghreb. The French foreign minister arrived in Algiers this afternoon from Tunis on a trip which, I remind you, is devoted to the consequences of the Gulf crisis in the Arab countries. Before his departure from Tunis, Roland Dumas referred to the Israeli-Arab conflict at a press conference. He called on the Hebrew state to make a symbolic gesture and to freeze the settlements in the occupied territories.

[Begin Dumas recording] It would be regrettable for Mr. Baker's initiatives to conclude with an acknowledgement of failure—in the event matters could only worsen, and any worsening of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will not only be harmful to the parties involved in the region but appears likely to be harmful to all of the countries of the Maghreb, the Near and the Middle East.

Personally, I hope that a symbolic gesture will be made by the State of Israel, which could be interpreted as being a mark of trust in response to the request made by President Bush and Mr. Baker—a freeze on the settlement of colonies in the occupied territories. That would appear to be something which would cause a stir, something which I am calling for from the bottom of my heart. [end recording]

#### Ghozali, Dumas Open Talks

*LD2505154191 Algiers APS in English 1018 GMT 25 May 91*

[Text] Algiers, 25/5/91 (APS)—Algero-French political talks started on Friday between Sid Ahmed Ghozali minister of foreign affairs and his French counterpart Roland Dumas who is paying a visit to Algeria. The state of bilateral relations, international political questions of common interest the situation in the Gulf and in the Middle East as well as the prospects of the settlement of the Palestinian question were at the center of these talks. Furthermore, relations between the two sides of the Mediterranean within the scope of 5+4 formula (Arab Maghreb Union's countries and Italy, France, Portugal and Spain) and within the scope of UMA-EEC (Arab Maghreb Union-European Economic Community) relations. [sentence as received]

#### Bendjedid Receives Dumas

*LD2505154591 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 May 91*

[Text] President Chadli Bendjedid, today received French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, who is visiting our country. Yesterday, Roland Dumas held a round of talks with his Algerian opposite number, Ahmed Ghozali, which were later widened to include the delegations of the two countries. Dumas will hold a press conference this afternoon at which he will assess his talks with Algerian officials.

#### Dumas Interviewed

*LD2605032891 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1200 GMT 25 May 91*

[Excerpts] Mr. Roland Dumas, on a 24-hour visit to Algiers, met Algerian officials yesterday and this morning. He spoke with his counterpart, Mr. Ghozali. He was received by the prime minister and is to meet the head of state. Between two meetings, Malek Benhacine met him for an exclusive interview.

[Begin recording] [Benhacine] Mr. Minister of State, good morning. Your visit to the Maghreb is ending. You know the traumatic results in these countries and public opinion following the Gulf war. We will review what you have to say about public opinion to reassure people. We will also hear your views on the respect for international law in the Near and Middle East, in particular in Palestine, where Israel—today more than ever—has decided to ridicule the principles and the rules of law, knowing its impunity is garanteed by those such as the United States who recently attacked the Iraqi people relentlessly in the name of respect for international law. I will also ask you if the permanent tension fueled by Israel does not strike a blow to harmonious, well-balanced, and mutually advantageous relations between the two shores of the Mediterranean. In short, what is in store here now and in the future? This will lead us to touch upon the bilateral relations between Algeria and

France. What is the status today? Each has its parameters and its explanations. The fact remains that in this period through which Algeria is passing, France seems to observe an extremely prudent attitude, without much in common with the friendship proclaimed in both Algiers and Paris in defense of the same democratic values, especially considering the unavoidable difficulties resulting from the negative effects of the economic reforms that Algeria is trying to implement.

Mr. Minister, is it true that Paris waits to see and decide? Could you say something about the future for the Algerian community in France following the creation of an integration minister by Mrs. Edith Cresson? Could we start with the Gulf war and its traumatic effects as shown by Maghreb public opinion?

[Dumas] One must start somewhere. [passage omitted]

[Benhacine] I want to ask you if France is as resolute in using all its energy and its influence to defend the principles and the rule of international law as far as the Palestinian people are concerned?

[Dumas] Absolutely. This has been said and repeated by the person who has the greatest authority to speak in the name of France—the president of the republic. There cannot be two sets of standards. The law is the law. If I may add my voice to the voice of the president of the republic, I would say that as a jurist I would be revolted to think that there would be one way to enforce the law in given circumstances and another one somewhere else. If one wants to see that the world order rests on a well established legal order today, one must have the firm will to force respect for the law, in particular for the UN resolutions, since it is the United Nations that says on the international level what this law ought to be.

[Benhacine] Mr. Minister, is that where the practice lies?

[Dumas] The practice lies there. We have always said that we are for holding an international conference on a Palestinian representation, for the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338. There will not be any peace in the region as long as this is not established. Today, as we are speaking, we know that the U.S. Government is launching an initiative, that Secretary of State Baker strives to provoke a conference that—not to embarass anybody—but that I consider an international conference to some degree, in some ways a regional one, in other ways a peace conference. I think these efforts are serious. If they do not provoke much response from the Israeli state, it is highly regrettable for world peace and peace in that region. If this experience, this initiative fails, the international community should draw conclusions. France will know how. When the moment is right, it will say that this problem needs to be addressed in a different manner.

[Benhacine] Do you mean the way taken to settle the problem between Kuwait and Iraq?

[Dumas] I would not like to get drawn onto that path today. You know perfectly well that the decision made to free Kuwait was a serious decision that matured and that demanded a lot of discussion and preliminary steps. [passage omitted]

[Benhacine] Mr. Minister, don't you think that Israel's stubborness represents the main threat to harmonious and balanced relations between the countries on the two shores of the Mediterranean? What future is there?

[Dumas] The idea of having a specific Mediterranean policy was launched by France in the 1980's. Since that date this idea has come a long way. It was adopted intelligently by some countries, particularly Italy. Several formulas have been proposed. Inside the EEC there is a so-called reformed Mediterranean policy for which a special budget will be granted. The Italian project consists of a conference on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean, the CSCM as it is called, on the model of what has been done among European countries in the framework of the CSCE. A more limited idea is one that would gather the five countries of the Maghreb and the four countries of the other side of the Mediterranean—Portugal, Spain, France and Italy. I name them in rotating geographical order. Among all these projects, the one that has most chance to succeed is the European Community project, which is a serious project, then the project of the five-plus-four meeting, the CSCM project is a nice project, an intelligent one, but it must be treated in an historical perspective. For instance, I recall that the CSCE succeeded after 15 years of diplomatic efforts. It was in 1974 that the foundations were laid with the Helsinki Treaty.

[Benhacine] The international order was different, too.

[Dumas] It was indeed, so one has to look at things differently. In 1990 we met in Paris for the CSCE summit. You see the time elapsed, so this effort must be seen in the long term. Let us add that, due to the reason you mentioned, things are even more complex for the Mediterranean than they were at the time for security in Europe, where the blocs were the blocs. Here you have all sorts of conflict. To treat this problem today seems difficult to me. The path leading to it seems difficult to me. On the other hand, you will note that the five Maghreb countries plus the four southern Europe countries do not have any conflict among themselves. They may have projects. These projects, developments, democratization, security, concerning the environment may be treated in a very peaceful way. This is why I believe that this formula must bring results fairly rapidly. We are striving in that direction. My travels to the Maghreb help me to realize that on these subjects we are in harmony with the countries involved, therefore we will be able to meet very shortly, probably in June. We will also meet in October to launch this first outline of the Mediterranean policy.

[Benhacine] This leads us to touch on Algerian-French bilateral relations. What is the status of Paris-Algiers

relations? The defense of the same democratic values meets very few echoes in France. Would you say, like Jacques Chirac, that multiparty democracy is a luxury for developing countries?

[Dumas] Am I telling you something new when I say that Mr Jacques Chirac is not necessarily one of my political friends, that I do not share his views? Far from it. In this particular case, it is absolutely true. I believe that Algeria has entered a very important stage in its history. Contrary to what you think—and this could just be a small provocation on your side—or to what some write, the authorities, French officials, follow with great interest the establishment of a democratic regime in Algeria. We witness the developments: a multiparty system, freedom of the press, free elections outside the one-party system, and the establishment of a new economic system. All these are factor that go in the right direction. I cannot meddle in Algerian affairs. That is not my intention at all, but it is not forbidden to have an opinion. I say that we admire the attempts, the projects, nurtured by Algerian leaders. This is my first answer; the second one is that this creates obligations for everybody. Relations between France and Algeria are old. They have witnessed high and low points, times of joy and of misfortune, but we must see that in an historical perspective. Today we must dedramatize the past, face the realities of a modern Algeria that may develop, that has a dynamic youth, and that knows the problems faced by all developing countries which set up a young democracy and therefore a fragile one. All democracies are fragile when they are marked by the seal of youth. This create obligations both in neighborhood but in behavior toward the Algerian democracy, toward Algeria and toward the Algerian people. Obviously we cannot do everything in the modern world. France has commitments everywhere in the world, but France also has limited means, however successful its economy and its finance might be. We must discuss these problems with peace of mind and with frankness. That is what I did this morning with your prime minister, who had the kindness to receive me for a long meeting. I greatly appreciated the long conversation we had.,

[Benhacine] You mentioned the material support that France might provide for the Algerian economy. Do you have any new facts today?

[Dumas] New facts, no; figures, yes. When the president of the republic made his state visit here in 1989, commitment were made by the French side. Over two years France made promises, and kept them, of 9 billion francs, with various budgetary allocations. Globally 9 billion francs are alloted. Some financial protocols have not yet been fully used, so Algeria has the possibility to draw on its budgetary resources if it wishes to do so. I know that there are some technical problems of public revenue and that talks are under way with banks. French banks, despite their status as state-owned banks, react like banks. Bankers are bankers and one must take into account their opinion. Nevertheless, authorities, in particular the minister for economy and finance, asked these banks to consider the different aspects of the problem a they are put forward by the Algerian Government. I told your prime minister this morning that as soon as I am back in Paris, I will ask our bankers to speed up the solution to these very precise and concrete problems. [passage omitted] [end recording]

### Discusses Mediterranean Issues

*LD2605085291 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 25 May 91*

[Text] Roland Dumas has been on a visit to Algeria. The French foreign minister met President Chadli and Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche. On the program of the talks was Mediterranean cooperation on the problems of the Mediterranean, an idea launched by Francois Mitterrand in the 1980s. Ministerial meetings will take place on the question in June and October. The five countries of the Maghreb, brought together by the Arab Maghreb Union, and the four countries of the Northern Mediterranean, which are members of the EEC, will take part in them. So what kind of problems are they going to tackle? Roland Dumas gives an example:

[Begin recording] Certainly, bilateral relations must remain the framework for relations between the countries. None of the parties is ready to abandon its rights of sovereignty, but there are a certain number of matters which can only be tackled as a whole—I would take as an example the problems of the environment, and the care which we must apply to the treatment of the Mediterranean fauna, or the pollution of the Mediterranean. That cannot be the subject of country to country debate, it has to be discussed together. So these are large matters of general interest which will be discussed within this context. [end recording]

### Dumas Cited on Maghreb

*LD2505205991 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 25 May 91*

[Text] Roland Dumas, France's minister of state for foreign affairs, left Algeria this afternoon following a 48-hour visit to our country. The chief of French diplomacy talks about the aim of his Maghreb tour and the issues he discussed with Algerian officials to our colleague Hizia Heizab:

[Begin Dumas recording in French with voiceover in Arabic] Yes, I carried out a tour of the Arab Maghreb region, and I wanted to conclude it with a stay in Algeria. I met all the Algerian leaders, and as you noticed I was received by President Chadli Bendjedid, who granted me a long audience. This morning I met with the prime minister, and yesterday I met with members of the government and we discussed the major issues of the hour.

With President Chadli we discussed all aspects of the international situation; the horizons of the AMU [Arab Maghreb Union], and the meetings between the AMU and the EEC and we fixed dates for them. We also had a

lengthy talk about relations between Algeria and France. We noticed that these relations are deep and very rich and that we should preserve all the distinguished aspects of these relations. We also recorded that we could increase the contacts between the two countries at all levels, especially at the ministerial level. [end recording]

Mr Dumas also said: I promised to return many times to Algeria, which for me is not only a duty but also a pleasure.

### Dumas Interviewed, Departs

*LD2505224691 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1800 GMT 25 May 91*

[Excerpts] French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas has left Algiers. He met with President Chadli Bendjedid and Foreign Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali. All aspects of relations between Algiers and Paris were discussed by the Algerian and French officials. The most burning foreign policy questions were also discussed during this 48-hour visit. Before leaving Algiers Roland Dumas gave a news conference. [passage omitted]

With regard to the Palestinian problem I will leave you to assess France's position, particularly concerning the current peace process:

[Begin Dumas recording] We weighed up the chances of Mr. Baker's initiative in this field with the president of the republic. Both sides were able to say that we wished for the success of the U.S. secretary of state's mission, without being unaware of the difficulties largely arising from Israel's attitude of obstruction. I hope that this attitude will change, that reason will triumph, and that the opportunity that has been given to us finally to resolve the Palestinian problem, after the Gulf crisis and in accordance with the principles that have been set down by the international community, will become as real one. I have already said before that I hope that Israel will make the gestures we are awaiting which would make it possible to launch a real process of peace, because if the opportunity that has been given to us to launch this process is not seized the situation will inevitably deteriorate and this deterioration will harm not only Israel, but also all the countries of the region. [end recording]

### Hamrouche Greets King Hasan II at Moroccan Border

*LD2705131491 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 27 May 91*

[Text] This just in: King Hasan II has arrived at the Algerian-Moroccan border. He was welcomed by Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche.

### Hamrouche Says Nuclear Bomb Not Needed at Present

*LD2605120391 Algiers APS in Arabic 0945 GMT 26 May 91*

[Text] Mouloud Hamrouche, head of government, stated last night on the television program "Dialogue" that he is against the political strike called by the Islamic Salvation Front because it contravenes the Constitution and democratic logic; and it is a right for the trade unions, but not for political parties. After foreseeing the failure of such a strike, he pointed out: Within the framework of a multiparty system, each party has the right to raise its own slogan, including slogans calling for changes in the electoral code and the holding of early presidential elections. However, it should address its political program to the citizens, and not to the government.

After reaffirming the government's determination to implement the reforms, Hamrouche dealt with the potential for implementation of privatization reforms in accordance with individuals' resources and with state help when necessary in the sphere of the transformation and the development of real estate.

Commenting on expenditures on youth, Hamrouche said that 4 billion centimes have been spent on this, and efforts are underway to allocate new financial resources for this purpose. He asserted the need to reevaluate Algerian history and the Algerian national character before and after Islam, so the Algerian citizen might know how to face problems and difficulties with the wisdom and farsightedness needed for the cohesion of the nation and to prevent it from making more mistakes.

Concerning nuclear research, the head of the government stated that such research began in 1983 with the aim of developing the national economy. He added that Algeria is not interested at this moment in producing a nuclear bomb because it does not need one. He gave the example of Germany and Japan, which do not have a nuclear bomb despite the fact that they are both developed countries with products on the international market.

Concerning Franco-Algerian relations, Mr. Hamrouche stated that they are exposed to numerous crises because of the density of the existing trade exchanges between the two countries. French businessmen still think they have the monopoly of the Algerian market, and they criticize us whenever we work on the basis of commercial competition and open our markets to the other countries. But whenever the matter concerns gas and oil, they claim to accept the laws of the ("free) market. Speaking about the Gulf war, he said that the area has now become more fragile, and the Arab world has become economically, politically, and socially weaker. He stressed that it will be the Arabs who pay the bill for that war. He said that the war could never lead to any positive effects except the fact that the Arab world will be more aware of its weaknesses, and that that awareness will be more prominent when every Arab leader starts talking in the name of his own country, and not in the name of the Arab world.

Concerning the Arab Maghreb, he said that the progress achieved so far is not bad, and that cooperation is satisfactory as we have started working along two axes, the first is bilateral and the second is multilateral. Consolidating bilateral cooperation will lead to the consolidation of the multilateral.

## Tunisia

### France's Dumas Describes Talks With Ben Yahya

*LD2405202191 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 23 May 91*

[Text] Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya at noon yesterday had a private talk with the French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, who arrived earlier in Tunis on a 24-hour visit. The talk was, afterward, joined by members of the two countries' delegations. An exchange of views on issues of mutual interest took place.

Following the meeting, Dumas stated that his visit to Tunisia comes as part of regular consultations between French and Tunisian leaders. He said that talks with the foreign minister dealt with Gulf issues. He said that they affected the situation in the entire area and that solutions could be found for them. He added that he reviewed some of the other conflicts which require speedy and just solutions, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Palestinian issue, and the Lebanese problem. He affirmed that Tunisian diplomacy is very active and that it has been playing a basic role in tackling these issues. Roland Dumas explained that exchange of views between the two delegations enabled one to touch on some issues which are related to the progress of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] and the relationship between the AMU and the EEC. He added that the two sides agreed to hold two ministerial meetings at the level of the western Mediterranean countries, the first before the summer holidays and the second in the autumn. The two meetings will be preceded by preliminary meetings at the level of experts, and a third meeting should then include representatives of the AMU and the EEC. The French minister talked about Tunisian-French relations and pointed out that the bilateral meetings calendar was examined. The first half of July was fixed as the date for the meeting of the grand mixed committee. He noted that there is a scope to give the relations of the two countries a new impetus, particularly in the economic and cultural fields. He said that his talks with Habib Ben Yahya tackled the cultural Tunisian-French exchanges, especially in the television field. They also touched on developing tourism and the prospect of bilateral meetings at ministerial level. The French minister described his talks, which lasted three hours, as [word indistinct]. Roland Dumas was asked about France's stand toward the peace efforts in the Middle East and again pointed out the need to speed settlement of the Palestinian issue and to benefit from the situation which emerged after the Gulf war. He said that the law that had been applied concerning Kuwait remains the same law when it comes to the Palestinian issue. He added that he acquainted the foreign minister with France's support for James Baker's peace initiatives. Dumas affirmed that his country hopes to take measures which strengthen confidence between the two: the Palestinian-Arab side, on the one hand, and the israeli side, on the other hand. He stressed the right of the Palestinians to a homeland and self- determination. Also, israel has (?similar) rights.

### Ben Ali Talks with France's Dumas

*LD2405224191 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 24 May 91*

[Text] President Zine El Abindine Ben Ali this morning received Mr. Roland Dumas, French minister of state for foreign affairs. The meeting dealt with relations between Tunisia and France, relations between the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] and the EEC and the Arab situation in the Arab scene, particularly the Palestinian problem.

The official presidency spokesman pointed out that President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali stressed the importance which he attaches to the need to consolidate relations of friendship and cooperation between the two countries in all spheres so as to guarantee promising and fresh vistas for those relations. His excellency the president also pointed out the role which France can play within the EEC to bolster development efforts in the AMU member countries, which is the best means for achieving democracy, development and stability in the Mediterranean region.

His excellency pointed out that France's role in this would meet his and President Francois Mitterrand's joint desire.

Mr. Roland Dumas made a statement in which he asserted that he was very grateful to have been received by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, with whom he examined the situation in general [words indistinct]. He added: The first topic which we examined was the problem of the Gulf and its development and the peace plan which can be drawn in the aftermath of this crisis. Of course we also dealt with other topics in the region, particularly the Palestinian problem, and we examined the U.S. initiatives before dealing with topics of concern to the Arab Maghreb and its relations with EEC.

He continued: I reiterated to his excellency the president France's eagerness to be the first power to support Tunisia in all international organizations, be it at the European level or at the level of international financial institutions. We attach the greatest importance to the meetings between AMU and EEC member countries, be it the four littoral to the Mediterrnean or all the 12 member countries, he added. I also reaffirmed to his excellency the president France's eagerness to preserve the excellent character of the two countries' relations, which should continue [words indistinct]. His excellency the president of the republic kindly invited me to visit Tunisia whenever it is possible, an invitation which I accepted with gratitude, he said.

### Holds News Conference, Departs

*LD2405203691 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 May 91*

[Text] French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas left Tunisia at noon today. He held a news conference before his departure at which he announced in particular that France's relations with Tunisia are excellent, and that they are of a distinguished nature, which both countries are eager to maintain. We hope, that these relations will maintain their exceptional nature, he said. Roland Dumas, who is leading an important delegation consisting of many personalities from the French Foreign Ministry, pointed out that this visit fell within the context of the series of visits he is paying to the Arab countries, in particular Maghreban ones, following the events which have shocked the Near and the Middle East regions at the end of last year and the beginning of this year.

[Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic at 1700 GMT on 24 May, in a similar report from the same newscast adds: "The head of state discussed with the French foreign minister Tunisian-French relations and the relations between the Arb Maghreb Union and the EEC."]

### Holds News Conference, Departs

*LD2405203691 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 May 91*

[Text] French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas left Tunisia at noon today. He held a news conference before his departure at which he announced in particular that France's relations with Tunisia are excellent, and that they are of a distinguished nature, which both countries are eager to maintain. We hope, that these relations will maintain their exceptional nature, he said. Roland Dumas, who is leading an important delegation consisting of many personalities from the French Foreign Ministry, pointed out that this visit fell within the context of the series of visits he is paying to the Arab countries, in particular Maghreban ones, following the events which have shocked the Near and the Middle East regions at the end of last year and the beginning of this year.

[Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic at 1700 GMT on 24 May, in a similar report from the same newscast adds: "The head of state discussed with the French foreign minister Tunisian-French relations and the relations between the Arb Maghreb Union and the EEC."]

## Kuwait

### Prime Minister Stresses Security, Protection

*LD2805013591 London KUNA in Arabic 1504 GMT 27 May 91*

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 27 May (KUNA)—Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al- Salim al-Sabah, Kuwaiti heir apparent and prime minister, stressed the importance of providing security for the citizens and residents of Kuwait.

This was stated in a speech to senior officer and police chiefs and the security services at the Interior Ministry this evening. [passage omitted]

Here is what he said. [passage omitted]

It gives me pleasure, brothers, to meet with you at this gathering, which I wanted to take place, so that I could talk to all of you about the affairs and worries of the situation, and about security in our beloved homeland. Security is something that all Kuwaiti brothers have been talking about, and are still talking about, at all their meetings and gatherings. [passage omitted]

It is not just in the interest of the public, the homeland, or the citizens, that each one of you is listening to this talk, which points to the concern and anxiety of the citizens. It is not in the interest of anyone in particular that you take various positions toward what happened and what is happening regarding various crimes, which are a new phenomenon in Kuwaiti society and are alien to its traditions and behavior.

All of us have often said that Kuwait is the country of security, safety, and tranquility. But brothers, what has happened in the last few months and what is happening now contradicts the slogan we have raised and is in conflict with it. This slogan is: Kuwait is an oasis of security.

If I have accepted what has happened in the last three months, it was due to my appreciation for your shouldering this responsibility, and due to the great shortage of men as a result of the absence of many of the brother security officers, who were abroad.

Another problem was the lack of transportation and communications equipment. I understand these circumstances and I understand the shortages you have been enduring, whether in the case of security men or means and equipment. But as of today I will not accept any excuses. In regard to security, I will not accept hearing that each area of Kuwait still suffers from crimes or that the security men who are assigned the task of providing security for the citizens are complacent. [passage omitted]

You must all cooperate and provide security for every citizen, regardless of area of residence. A citizen wants to preserve his life, honor, and property. Who provides this to the citizen? Who provides security and stability in all the populated areas? It is you, brother security men. You are the eye that does not go to sleep. You are required to be energetic and to tackle these problems with extreme seriousness and extreme firmness, because in no way can we accept the lack of security in the country or let chaos reign.

Every one of you working in these sensitive organs must have a sense of responsibility. Each of you, regardless of rank, is to be aware of the measures required to protect citizens.

Recently we accepted, for special reasons, the illegal practices and acts that took place in Kuwait. We cannot be patient any more and let the ill-intentioned people mess with the security of the homeland and that of citizens. These elements must be hunted down, followed, arrested, investigated, and brought to justice.

It is possible that some of you may say that these are sons of some officials or sons of a family who are misbehaving or committing acts in violation of the law. This sort of talk and these sort of excuses are totally unacceptable. I mean every word I say at this meeting. There is no one who is stronger or higher than the law. The law must be applied to everyone, without distinction and without favoritism.

Anyone who commits any violation, no matter how small or big, must be arrested at once and held in custody regardless of whose son he is. [passage omitted]

Every person who violates the law must pay the price. Your measures in providing security must be very firm. The elements committing crimes these days must be hunted down.

I said that these crimes have been denounced by Kuwaiti society. These crimes have been condemned and are now condemned by the people of Kuwait. The people of Kuwait are looking over their shoulder and are expecting immediate action from the men of the Interior Ministry, and are expecting these elements to be handled with an iron fist to put an end to such activity and to stop the behavior of these elements.

I repeat, these measures by security men must be in accordance with the powers and articles assigned to you as security men. I do not want any one of you to exploit his work in the Interior Ministry or commit acts that are in violation of the laws, regulations, and statutes which exist in the Interior Ministry.

Brothers: Each of you has followed the foreign media reports that mar our country's reputation abroad, and the reputation of all military institutions. Each of you has seen how the world has denounced, deplored, and condemned the Iraqi aggression in Kuwait, how it demanded that Iraq withdraw its forces, and how it supported the return of the legitimate authority. We must not lose this international position. We must not lose it as a result of individual or irresponsible behavior. As the world has supported and backed the liberation of Kuwait, we must win over the respect of these countries and the admiration of these peoples for Kuwait, at both

the popular and the official levels. This, brothers, will only be achieved by your constant vigilance day and night in order to stop these elements. Security can not be ensured by sitting behind desks. You are aware that we are passing through very critical and difficult circumstances that require from us all relentless and constant work to ensure security and stability for every citizen. [passage omitted]

I hear some people speak of an increase in the number of infiltrators. It seems to them that this is a weekly, if not a daily, increase. However, I want to reassure my brother citizens that this subject is not a secret. I say at this meeting that this subject, that is, preventing the entry of infiltrators, I delegate to your brothers in the Armed Forces [as heard]. I told the interior minister yesterday to take all the necessary measures and steps to prevent the entry of infiltrators and to prevent or confiscate all equipment and prohibited items that could be used by these elements. The interior minister will set up search and surveillance points so that those working at these points can arrest any person or persons trying to enter Kuwait by by-passing the official stations. These days I am considering, along with the brother interior minister, the brother undersecretary, and senior commanders, the possibility of taking speedy measures concerning the deportation of the evil elements who are using Kuwait as a haven. [passage omitted]

I turn now to another subject about which all citizens are talking. This subject is the spread or the existence of arms in public places. To the same extent that I charge all those working in military institutions, I also turn to my brother citizens. From a position of responsibility, I call upon everyone to sense the danger. I call upon everyone to cooperate continuously, purposely, constructively, and positively with the men of the National Guard and the Armed Forces. Lead the men of these institutions to the places where arms exist and lead the security men to arms caches or to dumps full of arms. [passage omitted]

I know that there are elements that collected many arms following the flight of the Iraqi forces, and that some moved these arms and these ammunitions. If there is a citizen who would speak up and hold the men of the Interior Ministry responsible, I would agree—this is the responsibility of the security men. However, the security men and those of the Interior Ministry call upon all the citizens to cooperate with them in various spheres. [passage omitted]

Brothers, I want you to continuously follow up and monitor the behavior and attitudes of some of the elements working in the Interior Ministry, regardless of the job of any particular policeman or officer, and regardless of rank. You should all cooperate for the sake of preserving the reputation of all those working in these sensitive organs. To accomplish all this, we should speedily get rid of these elements, preserve the honor of the profession, and preserve the reputation and behavior of the men of the Interior Ministry. In my estimation, the time has come to get rid of these elements and to cleanse all the organs of the Interior Ministry of such people, irrespective of rank or position. The interior minister, his aides and assistants, should be treated with seriousness in order to trace and follow the elements who are present and still working in the Interior Ministry. These elements should be removed, regardless of the consequences.

Brothers, I wanted to talk to you and, through the media, to my brother citizens, in the hope that the impression of the manner of your work and the method of your work changes, in order to make everyone who lives in this good land feel comfort, contentment, security, and stability. [passage omitted]

### Council of Ministers Extends Martial Law 1 Month

*LD2705180091 (Clandestine) Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1700 GMT 27 May 91*

[Text] Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Dhari 'Abdallah al-'Uthman stated that the Council of Ministers has decided to extend the period of martial law for another month, subject to a further extension.

He added in a statement to the Kuwaiti paper AL-ANBA' which was published in Cairo today that this decision was made during the meeting of the council yesterday on the recommendation of the ministers of interior and justice, and that this was in accordance with the requirements of the supreme interest of the homeland at this time.

### Hearing of 12 Collaboration Cases Postponed

*LD2605135791 (Clandestine) Radio Kuwait Arabic 1300 GMT 26 May 91*

[Text] Today, the fourth court martial chamber involving the hearing of 12 cases of persons accused of collaborating with the Iraqi authorities during the unjust Iraqi occupation of the country, adjourned until 9 July. KUNA says that these cases involve 19 persons, among whom are Kuwaitis, accused of deliberately helping the Iraqi authorities, stealing, and kidnapping.

## Saudi Arabia

### Joint Forces Chief on Threat From Iraq

*PM2705130091 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 24 May 91 pp 27, 28*

[Unattributed interview with Staff Lieutenant General Prince Khalid Bin-Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, commander of the joint allied forces in Saudi Arabia and the theater of operations; place, date not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-HAWADITH] What would have happened if the Saudi leadership had not decided to call in the fraternal and coalition armies?

[Khalid] The decision made by King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz was a historic and difficult one. Had it not

been for that decision, all calculations would probably have changed. Undoubtedly, Saddam Husayn's invasion of Kuwait was not its final target, but rather, the interim target. And if the decision had been delayed for a week, matters would have changed and all the cards—political and military—would have been jumbled up. Without a political settlement there can be no military settlement. [passage omitted]

[AL-HAWADITH] It has been reported that Iraq is rearming for a new war. What is your opinion of such a possibility?

[Khalid] I do not believe that anyone will trust a person like Saddam Husayn if he remains at the head of a government. And we take into account the worst possibilities. As for his fate, it is for the Iraqi people to decide. As far as we are concerned, the Iraqi people are a neighboring and fraternal Arab people. This has been our principle in our dealings with them from the outset. And I believe that, if Saddam remains, he will not dare to repeat what he did in the past. The possibility of his repeating it is small. [passage omitted]

[AL-HAWADITH] Do you still have POW's?

[Khalid] Yes, there are some POW's. One group of them does not wish to return to Iraq. And the instructions are that we all comply with the international laws promulgated at the 1945 Geneva conference on POW's, and with King Fahd's orders that they should be treated well. [passage omitted]

[AL-HAWADITH] [Saudi Defense Minister] Prince Sultan is making contacts with international military officials. Is this being done with the aim of strengthening the Saudi forces?

[Khalid] The development of the Saudi forces is among the Kingdom's priorities. That is why Prince Sultan is working in response to the directives of Armed Forces Supreme Commander King Fahd. Prince Sultan is well known for his dynamism, and he is instructing all committees concerned with the development of the Armed Forces to get on with the job. I have not joined those committees because I am still in the Joint Forces' Command. But what I know is that the Saudi Armed Forces are now in the process of making plans on the basis of the lessons learned.

[AL-HAWADITH] Are there still non-Saudi armies in the Kingdom's territory?

[Khalid] We still have Arab and Islamic armies. Their departure or presence depends on a political decision from King Fahd and the states' leaders. I do not wish to delve into that matter. As long as they are among us, they are with their brothers. As for the other states like the United States, Britain, and France, their armies are about to withdraw from their positions and return with God's safekeeping to their families. [passage omitted]

## Yemen

### Aden Reports Arrival of Ethiopian Naval Units

*EA2605214091 Aden Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 26 May 91*

[Text] A number of Ethiopian naval units have arrived on the shores of the Yemeni Republic carrying their crews of officers and men after the forces of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front captured the port of Aseb. SABA has learned that a committee has been formed to receive them, consisting of a number of brothers from the Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Interior and Security.

### Minister Complains U.S. Behaving 'Ruthlessly'

*TA2505093791 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0805 GMT 25 May 91*

[Telephone interview with Yuval Ne'eman, minister of science and technology, energy and infrastructure by 'Adi Talmor, in Moscow—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Ne'eman] [passage omitted] I was invited to meet with Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov and we had a very interesting meeting. We discussed political aspects as well as economic and industrial issues.

[Talmor] Did you ask the prime minister when will they kindly agree to reestablish full diplomatic relations with us?

[Ne'eman] Yes. He noted the fact that there is great rapprochement between us concerning stands on several issues, and we are able to cooperate. He said that the day when we attain diplomatic relations is drawing very near.

[Talmor] Mr. Ne'eman, has Moscow heard the Baker-Bush accusations concerning the ongoing setting up of settlements in the territories?

[Ne'eman] I will quote the Soviet prime minister, who told me: You have trouble with the Americans, not with us.

[Talmor] But there were additional remarks made in Washington this weekend.

[Ne'eman] Yes, I assume that following these remarks he jokingly said: You have trouble with the Americans, not with us.

[Talmor] Are you joking too?

[Ne'eman] I believe there is nothing to joke about. It is very sad that the United States are searching for ways to blame us. I believe this is a baseless accusation. I think that the U.S. Administration is showing hostility toward Israel, the kind of which the United States has never before shown. I am quite disturbed by this attitude, and I hope that the Jewish population in the United States will condemn the administration for this.

[Talmor] Do you not at least think that it would have been preferable to moderate somewhat the drive to settle in the territories these days?

[Ne'eman] I think that what is called for is that the United States moderate their statements.

[Talmor] How can this affect the economic aid and ties in general?

[Ne'eman] I think that I would take the economic aid and shove it in the faces of those who want.... [changes thought] I go back on this remark. I would say that it would be a very miserable kind of aid, if it is the charity of a superpower that begins to behave ruthlessly.

[Talmor] There is no doubt, however, that we will not get alternative aid from the USSR.

[Ne'eman] No, but we are getting very little aid from the United States, and we give a lot more than we get. [passage omitted]

### U.S. Praised for Assistance to Ethiopian Jews

*TA2605200291 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 26 May 91*

[Text] The United States has made it clear to the Addis Ababa regime that the release of the Jews is a precondition for convening the London conference for appeasement with the rebels. The current regime in Ethiopia demanded $100 million to allow Operation Solomon, but eventually settled for $35 million. This was reported at the cabinet session today.

The prime minister, the foreign minister, and other ministers praised the U.S. help, and Uri Lubrani, who coordinated the operation, even said that the Americans acted on this as if they were Israelis.

The government has decided that Israel will continue trying to bring here the Jews who were left in Ethiopia. Concerning the Jews who converted to Christianity and were not brought here in Operation Solomon, the prime minister said that he was given the information about them too late and did not want to jeopardize the whole operation. Now, however, the issue will be examined. During the cabinet session, no minister expressed opposition to bringing them over.

### No Negotiations Under Way for POW's in Lebanon

*TA2705192491 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 27 May 91*

[Excerpt] Official defense sources this evening asserted that there were no negotiations currently under way to release the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] prisoners held by the terrorist organizations in Lebanon. The cautious optimism voiced yesterday by the defense minister stems from the unprecedented announcement by the leader of the Hizballah that his organization is prepared to implement a prisoner exchange with Israel.

Our military affairs correspondent reports that Israel will not enter any negotiations before it receives a sign, or some kind of proof, that the Israeli prisoners held by the Hizballah are alive, even if that proof is delivered through the International Red Cross. After receiving such proof Israel would be ready to enter negotiations to release Lebanese detainees in return for Israeli soldiers. [passage omitted]

### Ben-Aharon on Government Settlement Policy

*TA2405182691 Jerusalem GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE in English 24 May 91*

["Excerpts" of news conference by Yosi Ben-Aharon, director general of the Office of the Prime Minister with unidentified correspondents on 23 May; place not given]

[Excerpts] Q: Could you explain the thinking behind the Israeli government's (policy on the settlements in the territories)?

A: We cannot entertain the idea that the areas of Judaea, Samaria and Gaza should be maintained clean of Jews until we come to the stage of the negotiations on the permanent status of the territories. Just as Arabs live in the territories and in Israel—and they develop, expand and set up their villages—we see no reason whatsoever to deprive Jews of the same privilege. That is totally separate from the issue of the final disposition of the territories because (...) we cannot ever entertain the idea of no Jews being permitted to live there. It is enough that we are facing a situation today where the entire Arab world is free of Jews, except for those who are held hostage in countries such as Syria and Yemen.

Q: ... But (there is) talk about confidence-building measures; this seems like the opposite.

A: That's one point of view. We think that there are many ways of creating the kind of climate that is conducive to negotiations, by way of confidence-building measures. As a matter of fact, Secretary Baker himself suggested—in his first round of meetings with the Israeli side—that such confidence-building measures, as improving the quality of the life of Palestinians in the territories, could (be taken) against the end of the state of war or the economic boycott, or the withdrawal of the "Zionism is Racism" resolution of the United Nations as a quid pro quo which could create the kind of setting for a process to proceed.

Q: There are already 90,000 or so Israelis living in the territories. Why the new settlements?

A: There had been (no new) settlements for quite some time, until this became a "cause celebre". There is no deliberate intention there and these so-called settlements are 5, 10 or 15 houses, which will not undermine or upset the demographic balance. (...) There are 750,000 Arabs in the State of Israel, so 100, 200 or 3,000 (more) Jews (in Judaea, Samaria and Gaza) will not detract from negotiations or a settlement that would be acceptable to both sides, (...) when we come to that issue at the appropriate time.

Q: When the settlements were originally set-up in the 1970s, the original argument was a security argument. Does that argument still hold today?

A: The security element is there, but it is not the only one. If one were to look at a map and see the importance of these territories—their strategic importance and geographic location— and if one would connect them to the contiguity of the exclusively Arab sovereign territory, (it would be possible) to understand the need for an Israeli presence in the Jordan valley and on the plateau and mountains of Judaea and Samaria. [passage omitted]

Q: Were you at all surprised by the strength of Baker's testimony yesterday on the subject of settlements and why do you think the settlements seem to be the main preoccupation?

A: There is, and has been, a disagreement between us and the U.S. administration on the issue of settlements which goes back many years. The difference between this present American government and previous ones is that (this one) has chosen to focus a lot of attention on this issue and that it takes every opportunity to spotlight the issue—especially in such circumstances as were evidenced in Congress. This is regrettable because we are convinced that this is not a real obstacle, if our neighbors really want to achieve an accommodation with us. We keep pointing to the earlier example of the Egyptian agreement with Israel, which was negotiated and concluded in spite of the fact that there were settlements in Judaea, Samaria and Gaza and that they were set up throughout the negotiations. We are convinced that this is a marginal issue compared to the big issues of setting-up the self-governing authority and autonomy and of the subsequent negotiations over the disposition of the territories. Only those of our neighbors who want to retrieve the territories for total and exclusive Arab sovereignty will be the ones who place the issue of territory at the top of their agenda. It is regrettable that the U.S. is giving credence and support to this approach. It will not bring us closer to a peace process.

Q: Was Baker as strong on this point during talks here? Has he been making this clear all along—that he sees the settlements as a big deal?

A: It was mentioned once or twice, but it did not feature in a comparable way to the way it was featured yesterday in Congress. To be exact (though), it was not mentioned in the opening statement by the Secretary of State; it was in response to a question. [passage omitted]

Q: Are you really surprised that the Arabs are reluctant to come to the negotiating table when Israeli officials come out with such a statement—that the territories are to be negotiated, but are not negotiable?

A: If the Arabs are going to place this issue at the top of the agenda and make it the "be all and end all," I would say that it demonstrates a lack of willingness to make peace with us because, if they only want to make peace on condition that the areas of Judaea, Samaria and Gaza have no Jews or settlements in them, it is not peace they want. It is the retrieval of territory that is exclusively Arab and under exclusive Arab sovereignty. (...) The issue is peace and territory is one component, but there are many other components. They have been waging an all-out war against us for more than 40 years and, therefore, the issue is peace. Again, this is the way it has been portrayed by the Arabs: Why should I make peace with you if you are not giving me any territory? But, who says that this has to be the balance? We say that the issue is peace and peace needs co-existence. Then, in the context of peace, they can raise the issue of territory. (...)

We think that these are, essentially, two different components. If there is a willingness to make peace, then territory can—and should—be treated in the negotiations and a solution will be found, as was the case with regard to Egypt.

Q: If the Arabs were to put recognition, peace or the end of the boycott at the top of the agenda, would that change the attitude to the settlements and the territories?

A: It's a question of credibility. We still have to be convinced that our Arab neighbors are ready to accept Israel as a state that has the same right to exist alongside the Arab countries in the Middle East. We just don't have an indication that this turn has taken place and we still have all kinds of indications to the contrary. This is why we have placed such a premium on proposals such as the confidence-building measures, the end of the boycott and all the other elements that were mentioned—because if this takes place and there is a momentum which snow-balls, we will become convinced that there is a real change of heart and, then, the government in office in Israel—whether it takes place today or in 5 years—will, perhaps, have a different attitude on all these issues. [passage omitted]

Q: Baker said that he had proposed the possibility of a trade- off, by which Israel would freeze the settlements in exchange for an end to the Arab boycott and to the state of war. Since what you say is that you want an end to the Arab boycott and to the state of war, and that settlement (activity) right now (is equivalent to) a few caravans, why wasn't this acceptable to you?

A: Because it is a matter of principle for us. It is not a question of a few caravans. Once the government of Israel accepts any kind of freeze, it violates a very basic principle in its policy—the right of Jews to live in any part of this land west of the River Jordan.

Q: Are Baker's remarks (on settlement activity) an obstacle to peace?

A: I feel that they will cause a problem with regard to the Arab perception of the issue. If they see that the U.S. puts such a premium on the issue, I wouldn't be surprised if they also placed it at the top of their agenda. [passage omitted]

Q: So, in the context of all of [UN Security Council Resolution] 242—of a lot of other issues being solved—Israel would consider trading territories for peace?

A: I will never say that Israel accepts this juxtaposition of territory for peace. Israel is willing to negotiate peace and, in the context of real negotiations, all issues can be placed on the table—including territory, if the Arabs have any problems with territory. I, personally, don't have any problem with territory. [passage omitted]

Q: Do you totally renounce what happened at Camp David? It seems to be a great shining example: You gave up some territory and you got peace. Do you think that the peace with Egypt is not a good peace?

A: The peace with Egypt is not as good as we would have wanted it to be. That is a fact. We had high hopes of real, normal relations in every sphere and we hoped that Egypt would be a leading proponent of peace with Israel, which is—unfortunately—not the reality. We took a risk with regard to the Egyptian negotiations when we decided to do what we did—with a lot of heartache and internal debate. We decided that it was a justifiable risk because of the circumstances and the geographic location of the territory (in) question, and because Egypt was the first country to complete peace with us. Prime Minister Begin hoped that this would lead us to a snow-balling effect that would bring in other Arab countries to make peace with us.

Q: Hasn't Egypt kept the peace? There's been no war with Egypt.

A: If you say peace (as opposed) to war, of course. It's better than war, but it's not the kind of peace we hoped (for).

Q: Moreover, when you gave up territory in Sinai, you pretty much agreed that there would be no Jews there. (...) As far as I know, it was occupied territory. What's the difference between the Sinai and the West Bank?

A: The West Bank was under Jordanian occupation, even between 1948 and 1967. It wasn't recognized. Gaza was under Egyptian (occupation). As you well know, that was not the case with regard to Sinai. (Secondly), Sinai is a desert and those settlements that were established in Yamit by the Labor government had a very clear defense and strategic importance because they believed that that would be a buttress against any future Egyptian invasion from Sinai. Yes, we did (evacuate Israeli Jews from there) and that, too, was a very painful experience. Never again. [passage omitted]

### Minister Views Israeli Stand on Treaty With Syria

*NC2405192691 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1545 GMT 24 May 91*

[Text] Information Minister Albert Mansur, who praised the signing of the Lebanese-Syrian treaty, has commented on Israel's stand on this treaty. He said: Israel is our enemy and its stand does not concern us as we stand united.

During a visit to the city of Ba'labakk, Minister Mansur said that Resolution 425 will be implemented with the help of the Arab brothers and the entire world. He added that under the al-Ta'if agreement, we have the right to use all means to liberate our land. He said that the resistance has been protected.

Asked about guarantees for the security of the Palestinian camps, Minister Mansur said that the Palestinians have the same guarantees as the Lebanese.

## Israeli, SLA Activities in South Reported

### SLA-Nasirite Clashes

*NC2805095291 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 28 May 91*

[Text] Clashes involving heavy weapons, artillery, and machine guns are raging along the Kafr Falus battle lines between the South Lebanese Army [SLA] and the Nasirite Popular Organization.

### Israeli Shelling; No Casualties

*NC2705083691 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 27 May 91*

[Text] Israel is continuing its attacks on areas in southern Lebanon. Israeli forces shelled the area of Wadi Hujayr and the banks of Nahr al-Litani from their positions in al-Qantarah for 30 minute last night after illuminating the areas with flares.

No casualties have been reported as a result of this attack.

### Attacks Continue

*NC2605063291 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 26 May 91*

[Excerpt] In the resisting south, Israeli occupation forces and their agent militias continue their threats and attacks on the south in the wake of the signing of the treaty of brotherhood, cooperation, and coordination between Lebanon and Syria.

The agent militias stepped up their military escalation along the combat lines of Kafr Falus, which were the scenes of heavy fighting last night. The clashes then extended to cover other areas in 'Ayn al-Mir, Liba', and several villages in Iqlim al-Tuffah and al- Nabatiyah. Shells fell on al-Luwayzah, Sujud, 'Ayn Bu Siwar, Mlikh, and 'Arab Salim.

Meanwhile, an Israeli infantry force advanced toward the Majdal Zun village at 0830 yesterday and took up positions 200 meters from the village. The force withdrew at 0900.

According to reports from the occupied border strip, enemy forces continued to reinforce their positions and gnaw off Lebanese land. The reports added that Israeli forces have brought additional troops and armored cars to the eastern sector. [passage omitted]

### Reinforcements, Other Actions

*NC2505120291 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1030 GMT 25 May 91*

[Text] Israeli reinforcements and the annexation of land are continuing in the occupied border strip. Our correspondent in the eastern sector of southern Lebanon reported today that the Israeli forces and the Lahd militia have reinforced their positions in the sector with more troops and armored vehicles. In the al-Khiyam area, the occupation forces prevented civilian vehicles from traveling on the public road between (Bab al-Siniyah) and al-Wazzani up to al-Mari where the occupation forces are still opening roads and fencing off some areas of land.

Our correspondent has learned that the road linking (Burj al- Muluk) and the al-Khiyam plain, which passes close to the airport, was closed by the occupation forces. This airport is used by Israeli military helicopters. The airport is guarded by the occupation army forces.

Our correspondent also said that the militia security is forcing residents of the border strip to issue statements opposed to the Lebanese-Syrian treaty, declaring that Israel will remain in the south and that implementation of UN Resolution 425 has become impossible and the Lebanese Government must reconcile itself to this fact and cooperate with Israel.

### Helicopters Overfly Tyre

*NC2505083791 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 25 May 91*

[Text] An Israeli infantry force advanced toward the Majdal Zun village at 0830 today. The force withdrew at 0900.

Meanwhile, Israeli helicopters flew over Tyre this morning.

### Said Expanding Presence

*NC2505080891 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 25 May 91*

[Text] The Voice of the South radio has emphasized that Israeli threats must be taken seriously in the wake of the signing of the Lebanese-Syrian treaty. The same radio said that the treaty gives Israel a pretext to stay in the

strip and expand their presence. The radio said Tel Aviv, which is very security minded, will move to confront the danger.

In another development, an official Lebanese source has said that the Lebanese Government has decided to lodge a complaint to the UN Security Council regarding Israeli attacks on south Lebanon. Ambassador Khalil Makkawi, Lebanon's permanent representative at the United Nations, has started his exchanges with the UN Security Council members prior to lodging the complaint.

### Shelling, Tank Reinforcements

*NC2405122491 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 24 May 91*

[Text] According to reports from the south, the artillery shelling of Humin al-Fawqa, 'Arab Salim, al-Luwayzah, Jba', Mlita, 'Ayn Bu Siwar, and the forests of Sujud and 'Anqata from the Israeli occupation forces' positions in Sujud anmd B'ir Kallab has been ongoing since dawn today. Intermittent clashes also took place on Kafr Falus-Lib'a-'Ayn al-Mir frontlines.

Security sources reported that the occupation forces have sent large reinforcements of tanks to the occupied border strip through the border post of Metulla. Meanwhile, Israeli warplanes have continued their sorties over the south, particularly Sidon and the Palestinian camps, breaking the sound barrier in the process.

### Islamic Resistance Activities Reported

*NC2405191191 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1630 GMT 24 May 91*

[Text] The Islamic Resistance detonated an explosive device under an enemy tank on the outskirts of the southern town of Sujud at 0930 today.

In another development, Israeli military vehicles were seen moving from Qal'at al-Shaqif to Tallat 'Ali al-Tahir at noon today.

The Irish contingent in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has reported that the occupation forces' tanks fired shells filled with nails when they bombarded Kafra two days ago in an attempt to cause the greatest possible number of casualties.

### Army Commander Discusses Deployment to South

*NC2705055291 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 27 May 91*

[Text] Army Commander General Emile Lahhud has stated that the next step of the Army deployment will focus on the south, an area which needs a great deal of attention to rescue it. He said: Our success in the south depends on consolidating our military forces there and the withdrawal of the Israeli enemy.

In his monthly interview with the Army magazine published today, Gen. Lahhud said: We have dispatched fresh forces to the Tyre area preparatory to their deployment to the areas where the UN Interim Force in Lebanon is operating. This is a necessary step on the path to implement Resolution 425. He mentioned the fact that the attempts made from time to time to impede the process will only increase our determination to continue to implement this national task, regardless of the sacrifices.

## Hizballah, Al-Musawi Comment on POW Initiative

### Al-Musawi Stand Clarified

*NC2505112291 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 25 May 91*

[Text] AFP has cited Hizballah's Information Office as saying that Hizballah Secretary General 'Abbas al-Musawi's initiative regarding the swap of prisoners with Israel not only involves Lebanese prisoners but Palestinian detainees in the Israeli prisons as well.

According to Hizballah offices, the secretary general's proposal concerns the Israeli prisoners being held by Hizballah. The office, however, did not say how many Israeli prisoners exist or if they are still alive. The office added that Hizballah is not concerned with the fate of the Israeli prisoners held by other parties.

### Hizballah Denies TIMES Report

*NC2705095591 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0900 GMT 27 May 91*

[Text] In a report attributed to its Beirut correspondent, THE NEW YORK TIMES yesterday reported that Israel and Hizballah had reached an agreement in principle on a deal for the exchange of prisoners that includes the release of the Western hostages held in Lebanon. The paper adds that the Red Cross voiced its readiness to organize the exchange.

In a call to our radio, a Hizballah source denied THE NEW YORK TIMES report and said that Hizballah's stand was expressed by Secretary General Shaykh 'Abbas al-Musawi when he said that Hizballah is prepared to release the two Israeli prisoners it holds in return for Israel's release of the Lebanese and Palestinians prisoners it holds. He said that this proposal concerns only the Israeli prisoners held by Hizballah. He strongly denied that the matter is connected with the issue of the foreign hostages.

### Al-Musawi Comments

*NC2505174891 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 25 May 91*

[Text] Hizballah Secretary General 'Abbas al-Musawi predicts that Israel will exploit Lebanon's indifference about delivering a hard blow. He said that the superficially healthy situation, based on the fragile structure of all these bricks that have been put on top of each other,

will be struck if this indifference continues, and the strike will come from Israel.

In an interview with al-Nur Radio this evening, he said that even if the situation in Lebanon seems solid, Lebanon is unable to confront the smallest external storm, a storm which could threaten all the accomplishments that had been made in the Lebanese arena.

He stressed that Israel will leave the south only by armed force and resistance. He pointed out that there are Muslim and Palestinian prisoners in Israel who should be released. He said: Once Israel does this, there may be some (?kind) of swap between us.

He noted that the current regime is not a good one. The al-Ta'if accord has completely perpetuated sectarianism.

Israeli radio cited Hizballah Information Office sources as saying that Hizballah's offer to swap prisoners with Israel also involves the Palestinians whom Israel detained in Lebanon and Lebanese detainees.

### Interviewed on POW Exchange

*NC2605115991 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1030 GMT 26 May 91*

[Interview with Hizballah Secretary General 'Abbas al-Musawi by unidentified reporters; date, place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Musawi] As for the prisoner exchange issue, we shoulder legitimate and humanitarian responsibility for every prisoner held by Israel or by Israel's agent Antoine Lahd. Therefore, it is natural for us to move with all strength to liberate the prisoners. During the major operation—the operation to capture the two prisoners—carried out by the Islamic resistance, we had a plan to rescue our brothers from the hands of enemies. There was also a large operation in western al-Biqa' as a result of which a number of agent Lahd's army troops were taken prisoner. The main objective behind this operation was to put pressure through the prisoners to bring about the release of our Palestinian and Lebanese brothers because we feel guilty about the sister strugglers who are being detained in al-Khiyam prison. It is tragic and we feel pained that our sister strugglers are being held by the Zionist enemy and his agent Lahd.

Proceeding from this perspective, we proposed this initiative and we accurately set up our conditions. However, the response of the Israeli enemy and Lahd was incomplete and failed to respond to all our conditions. Therefore, we are waiting for Israel and Lahd to accept all our conditions so that this exchange can take place normally.

[Reporter] Can you repeat the conditions?

[Al-Musawi] One of the most important conditions is to bring about the release of the Lebanese and Palestinian brothers. But the Israelis only mentioned the Lebanese.

[Reporter] Israel has raised the issue of 16 foreign (detainees) in Lebanon.

[Al-Musawi] From the beginning, we proposed the initiative concerning what we have. We have two Israeli prisoners and some Lahdist soldiers who were captured in Lahd positions. There are also some agents who were captured inside the so-called border strip. We proposed the initiative regarding the prisoners we hold. Israel should contact the parties concerned about the other ones.

### Says Western Hostages Not Held

*NC2805083591 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 28 May 91*

[Text] His Eminence Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi, Hizballah secretary general, has asserted that Hizballah cannot negotiate the release of the Western hostages, adding that it can only negotiate over the two Zionist POW's it holds.

In a press statement, al-Musawi said: We can negotiate over the two Israeli soldiers we hold, but any contacts over the release of the Western hostages must be with the parties that hold them.

Al-Musawi stated: We do not involve ourselves in the issue of Western hostages, and no one has asked us to do so. He added that he is awaiting the Zionists' reply to his proposal last Friday for exchanging the POW's with detainees. He asserted that the exchange must include all Lebanese and Palestinian detainees held by the Israelis and agent Lahd's militia. Al-Musawi expressed cautious optimism over this issue's resolution.

### Chamber of Deputies Endorses Treaty With Syria

*NC2705141991 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1352 GMT 27 May 91*

[Excerpt] We have just received the following report from our news desk:

During a marathon session from 1100 to 1630 today, the Chamber of Deputies endorsed the draft bill authorizing the government to finalize the treaty of brotherhood, cooperation, and coordination between Lebanon and Syria. Forty-six deputies voted in favor; one deputy, Dr. Albert Mukhayybir, voted against.

Nineteen deputies spoke during the session. Dr. Albert Mukhayybir strongly assailed the treaty. He told the government: Every treaty remains a draft bill until the Chamber of Deputies approves it, when it then becomes a law. But you have done the opposite. [passage omitted]

## Kuwaiti Defense Minister on Official Visit

### Speaks on Arab Force

*LD2705132591 London KUNA in Arabic 1229 GMT 27 May 91*

[Text] Damascus, 27 May (KUNA)—Kuwaiti Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim has denied there are any disagreements among "Damascus declaration" countries and has expressed his dissatisfaction with reports to that effect.

On a tour during which he has also visited Egypt—which together with Syria and the Gulf Cooperation Council states constitute the "Damascus declaration" states—Shaykh 'Ali on his arrival here stressed that the allied forces had an effective role in liberating Kuwait and that "the gathering of these forces will be reassuring to Kuwait."

The Kuwaiti minister said he is carrying a verbal message from Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah for Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

He pointed out that Kuwait is a small country destroyed by war and still cannot confront the Iraqi invader even after withdrawal. He said there have been worrying indications from the Iraqi regime and "therefore I am talking to Syria, Egypt, and the Gulf Cooperation Council in order to proceed with coordination to establish a permanent Arab force in Kuwait."

### Received by Al-Asad, Talas

*JN2705182691 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 27 May 91*

[Text] At 2010 today, President Hafiz al-Asad received Kuwaiti Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah. The meeting was attended by General Mustafa Talas, deputy prime minister and defense minister, and Ahmad 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Jasim, ambassador of the State of Kuwait in Damascus.

Gen. Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, received at his office this evening Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah, defense minister in the State of Kuwait, and his delegation. The meeting was attended by General Hikmat al-Shihabi, chief of staff of the Army and Armed Forces; General 'Ali Aslan and General Hasan Turkumani, deputies chief of staff; and the Kuwaiti ambassador in Kuwait.

The talks dealt with brotherly relations and coordination between the two fraternal armies and ways of enhancing these ties to serve the mutual interests of the two fraternal countries.

Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah arrived at Damascus International Airport today. He was received by Gen. Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister; and Gen. 'Ali Aslan and Gen. Hasan Turkumani, deputies chief of staff; and senior General Command officers. Following the reception, they departed for Damascus, where the guest minister will stay.

### Kuwaiti Defense Minister Speaks at Damascus Airport

*LD2705185891 (Clandestine) Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1700 GMT 27 May 91*

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Kuwaiti Defense Minister 'Ali Sabah al-Salim said that the weapons and ammunition left behind by Iraqi forces are weapons of destruction—great destruction will result from their use. Some of them will be used and the rest will be disposed of or reexported.

In reply to a question about the weapons used by the Kuwaiti resistance during the criminal Iraqi occupation, the defense minister said that all these weapons will be collected from Kuwaitis—both citizens and residents. This measure results from the Kuwaitis' earnest desire to avoid any incidents involving such weapons.

Concerning the trials of those who collaborated with the occupation authorities, Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim said that there had been a distortion of these just trials. The source of it was international Zionism and the Iraqi regime. He stressed that all such trials are constitutional and legal. No one can interfere with them except the judicial authority, which is known for its honesty.

He said that all of these trials take place in public and in view of the international press.

He affirmed that there are people who want to tamper with the information system in Kuwait. Therefore, the trials are translated in a way that will prevent this.

The Syrian defense minister led those who welcomed Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim on arrival at Damascus airport.

## Official Talks With PLO Delegation Begin

### Talks Previewed

*LD2605201991 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 26 May 91*

[Text] The first round of official talks between the Palestinian side, headed by Brother Abu-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], head of the PLO Political Department, and the Syrian side, headed by Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', began before noon today in the Syrian capital, Damascus. The talks will deal with Palestinian-Syrian bilateral relations and means of strengthening and developing them. They also deal with the situation in the region and international peace efforts and the situation on the Arab scene and means of strengthening Arab cooperation and solidarity. The Palestinian delegation, which is led by brother Abu-Lutf and includes brothers Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, Abu-'Ali Mustafa [Mustafa al-Zibri], and Sulayman al-Najjab, members of the PLO Central Committee, arrived yesterday in Damascus,

where they were welcomed by Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs. In a statement to the journalists on arrival, brother Abu-Lutf said: Syria and the PLO have common views on the majority of issues.

### Talks Open 26 May

*JN2605123991 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 May 91*

[Text] Syrian-Palestinian talks began in Damascus this morning when Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' met with a PLO delegation led by Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department. The Palestinian delegation comprises Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, Sulayman al-Najjab, and Abu-'Ali Mustafa [Mustafa al-Zibri]. It is noteworthy that Al-Shar' received a delegation of the Palestinian National Salvation Front yesterday evening.

Palestinian sources close to the PLO delegation told our radio that in addition to developing relations between Syria and the PLO, the agenda includes discussing the peace efforts in the region.

Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh told us that the first meeting today dealt with the efforts being made to hold a peace conference on the basis of international legitimacy through the participation of all parties, and that the talks focused on the importance of the United Nations' role and the need for the conference to have an effective role. 'Abd-Rabbuh spoke to our radio about a positive acceptance of the idea of coordination among the Arab countries that are concerned with the peace conference and about the importance of restoring Arab solidarity. 'Abd-Rabbuh said the PLO welcomed the treaty of brotherhood, cooperation, and coordination between Syria and Lebanon and described the atmosphere of the Palestinian-Syrian talks as positive.

The talks will continue today and tomorrow.

### Al-Shar', PLO Discuss Peace Efforts

*JN2605143291 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1415 GMT 26 May 91*

[Text] A round of talks was held this morning at the Foreign Ministry between Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department. The talks were attended on the Syrian side by Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, and the heads of the [Foreign Ministry's] Palestine and Arab Homeland Departments. On the Palestinian side the talks were attended by PLO Executive Committee Members Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, Abu-'Ali Mustafa [Mustafa al-Zibri], and Sulayman al-Najjab.

The conversation centered on the international efforts to convene the Middle East peace conference to achieve a just and comprehensive solution within the framework of international legitimacy and on the basis of UN resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242 and 338. They also made a general review of international and Arab developments and bilateral relations.

### Evening Session Held

*JN2605203691 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 26 May 91*

[Text] At the Foreign Ministry this evening, a round of talks was held between Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and PLO Political Department head Faruq Qaddumi. Attending on the Syrian side were Nasir Qaddur, state minister for foreign affairs, and the chiefs of the Arab Homeland and Palestine Departments at the Foreign Ministry. On the Palestine side, the session was attended by PLO Executive Committee members Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, Abu- 'Ali Mustafa [Mustafa al-Zibri], and Sulayman al-Najjab.

The talks were a followup to the morning session dealing with international efforts to convene an international Middle East peace conference to work out a fair, comprehensive solution based on international legitimacy and UN resolutions, especially Resolutions 242 and 338. They also reviewed Arab and international developments and bilateral ties.

### Qaddumi Meets PNSF's Al-Fahum

*JN2705185391 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 27 May 91*

[Excerpts] The PLO Executive Committee delegation led by PLO Political Department head Faruq Qaddumi met in Damascus today with Khalid al-Fahum, head of the Palestinian National Salvation Front [PNSF]. Al-Fahum said his talks with Qaddumi dealt with the latest developments regarding the Palestine question and Palestinian national unity, proceeding from the PNSF initiative, which is based on assessing the past stage and forming a preparatory committee in order to form a new Palestine National Council. Al-Fahum said that the two sides' views were similar and that they agreed to resume talks in the future regarding the unionist step. [passage omitted]

The Syrian-Palestinian talks between Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and PLO Political Department head Faruq Qaddumi concentrated on conditions for settling the Arab-Israeli conflict. An informed Palestinian source said the two sides support holding a peace conference under UN auspices with the participation of the United States, the USSR, and Europe based on Resolutions 242 and 338. The Palestinian source, which was informed of the substance of the talks, added that Syria supports the principle of the PLO's participation with an independent delegation or within a joint Arab delegation. The source added that both sides agreed to work to reinforce coordination with the Arab states that are directly concerned with the conflict, particularly Jordan. [passage omitted]

### Al-Asad, Khaddam Meet Qaddumi

*JN2805113091 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1117 GMT 28 May 91*

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad at 1100 today received the PLO delegation, comprising Faruq Qaddumi, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, Abu-'Ali Mustafa [Mustafa al-Zibri], and Sulayman al-Najjab, PLO Executive Committee members. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' attended.

Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam at 0930 today received Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department. The meeting reviewed the general situation in the region after the Gulf war and the developments related to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

### People's Assembly Endorses Treaty With Lebanon

*JN2805063091 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 28 May 91*

[Excerpt] Damascus—In its session last night under Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, the People's Assembly yesterday endorsed the draft law on the treaty of brotherhood, cooperation, and coordination between the Syrian Arab Republic and the Republic of Lebanon.

Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi attended the session, which was devoted to discussion of the reports made by the committees of legislative and constitutional affairs and Arab and foreign affairs on the draft law of the treaty signed in Damascus on 22 May 1991.

Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah said in a speech to the Assembly that Syria, under the leadership of President Hafiz al- Asad, which cares about Lebanon and its people and all Arab issues, has made every effort and provided all moral and material support to end Lebanon's crisis.

Today, this hope is becoming a reality and Lebanon is returning to its Arab march and normal situation. It is resuming its civilizational, pan-Arab, and humanitarian role. Thus, together with al-Asad's Syria, it is crowning this step with the treaty of brotherhood, cooperation, and coordination, which is an example to be emulated by all Arabs in the relations that should prevail and be applied. It also constitutes a starting point for progress and development in the twin countries and the whole Arab nation.

Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi delivered a speech in which he said: It is of great importance and significance that the Lebanese Council of Ministers approved the treaty of brotherhood, cooperation, and coordination before it was presented for discussion to the Syrian cabinet, and that the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies endorses it before it is discussed in your esteemed Assmebly. The significance of this treaty is that Lebanon's wishes were its main priorities. What the Lebanese believed was beneficial to them, Syria also believed was beneficial to it, to Lebanon, and to joint Arab action.

Al-Zu'bi said that the Syrian-Lebanese achievement embodied in the successful national accord process in Lebanon and in the treaty of brotherhood, cooperation, and coordination is a step that points to a new path and to broad, prosperous horizons for Syria and Lebanon. This could strengthen the combined Arab position, which the Damascus declaration has pushed forward to deepen solidarity and strengthen the bases of joint, effective, and fruitful Arab action. [passage omitted]

## Afghanistan

### Najibullah Addresses Nation on UN Statement

*LD2705202791 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1630 GMT 27 May 91*

[Address to the nation by President Najibullah on 27 May—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Dear compatriots, sisters and brothers, you are aware of the statement by His Excellency Javier Perez de Cuellar, the UN secretary general, concerning Afghanistan. I would like to inform you, compatriots, of the position of the Republic of Afghanistan regarding the statement and the development of the search for ways and methods to attain a political and peaceful solution to the question of Afghanistan. Prior to speaking about this plan, I would once again inform you, dear compatriots, about the measures that have been taken by the Republic of Afghanistan to arrive at a political and peaceful solution.

Four and one-half years ago, as a result of assessing the internal, (?regional) and international situation, it was found that we could establish grounds for a broad alliance of all Afghans under the slogan of defending high national interest, and grounds for attracting the cooperation of all political forces toward the creation of a broad-based coalition government for peace and stability in Afghanistan. So we declared the policy of national reconciliation, which embraces the demands of all our people and responds to the solution of the difficult military-political situation. Despite the difficulties resulting from the irresponsible positions taken by some sides regarding the peace proposals put forward by the Republic of Afghanistan during this time, many measures in various spheres of the political, social, and economic life of the country were adopted within the framework of this policy. Among them are: the conclusion of the Geneva accords; the withdrawal of the Soviet forces; the elimination of power monopoly by one party; approval of the Constitution; restoration of parliamentary activities; broadening of democracy aimed at activating a multiparty system; maintenance of nongovernment publications; freeing of prisoners; issuance of numerous decrees on the pardoning of tax arrears, etc.; municipality elections; and dozens of other effective measures.

Along with these measures, the Republic of Afghanistan did not for a moment cease its efforts to search for a political and peaceful solution for the country. It has consistently continued its all-round efforts, and has put forward numerous proposals to the opposition for a political solution. Numerous letters were sent to the leaders of organizations residing in Peshawar and Iran, commanders of the armed opposition groups, and to various Afghan personalities inside and outside the country. In those letters, the full readiness of the Republic of Afghanistan for talks and understanding with them was expressed. Fortunately, a number of them approved the proposals of the Republic of Afghanistan, and some actively cooperated toward their realization, for which we express gratitude.

We also addressed letters to the leaders of the Islamic countries and other states, His Excellency the UN secretary general, and the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States, requesting their assistance in the search for a political and peaceful solution to our problem.

Fortunately, the passage of time and new developments in respect to a political solution to the problem of Afghanistan proved that a political and peaceful solution with the active participation of all Afghans and Afghan political forces is the only way to immediately ensure peace in Aghanistan. For this purpose, the efforts of the Republic of Afghanistan, the United Nations, and a number of countries were concentrated to seek a political solution acceptible to the various sides.

The basis of this solution, which is compatible with the interests of the people of Afghanistan, was clearly reflected in the recent statement of His Excellency Javier Perez de Cuellar, secretary general of the United Nations, and has been approved by the United States of America, the Soviet Union, and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. While we express gratitude for the efforts of His Excellency the UN secretary general, we point out that the statement provides a general basis for ensuring peace, and all Afghans should jointly search for ways to attain it.

The Republic of Afghanistan, as the first (?side) to approve the UN proposal, believes that general principles of the political and peaceful solution of the Afghan problem, as presented by the UN secretary general, present a propitious opportunity for all Afghan political forces to jointly end this great problem facing Afghans by following it, and by participating in its implementation. With the publication of the statement by the UN secretary general, the people of Afghanistan cordially welcome the proposal as the beginning of a political and peaceful solution to end the war. So far, a number of organizations, internal armed commanders and political and social personalities, inside and outside the country, have approved the proposal of the UN secretary general.

As you know, regretfully, some still hold on to their previous inclinations, and take varying positions while making contradictory remarks—and this despite the fact that they themselves have not proposed a realistic plan. With such remarks, they negate our society's existing realities. Their remarks are by no means compatible with the interests and hopes of our suffering peoples. Other groups still reckon on a military solution, which has no outcome but bloodshed, pain, and the sorrow of our people. Another group maintains a passive stance or a recluctant position. We wish they would review this conservative approach and exercise their active national and Afghan participation at this critical juncture in the country. Another group wants to delegate to non-Afghan

forces the authority to implement the political and peaceful solution of the problem of Afghanistan, authority which belongs only to the people of Afghanistan. This right and authority has clearly been emphasized in the statement by the UN secretary general. The Republic of Afghanistan has many times said, and notes again, that foreign factors should not be exchanged with internal factors, or vice versa.

We seriously believe that it is the sole right of the people of Afghanistan to choose their fate, future, government, and socioeconomic system. A suitable opportunity has now been presented for the demonstration of the will of our people. Therefore, the national interest of the people of Afghanistan demands that all parties, formations, and organizations take a responsible attitude in ensuring peace and safeguarding the independence and territorial integrity of the country, without any restricted party, group, or regional interests. Everyone knows that the first steps to peace have been taken, and day by day we get closer to the goal of peace. Therefore, why should we not make joint efforts to attain this humane goal more rapidly? Why should we allow the blood of the Muslim people of Afghanistan to be shed? If we could put an end to the war one day earlier, we would have rendered a great service to our people's home—dear Afghanistan. For over 13 years, limited party formation, strata, and group interests have inflicted much misery on our people.

This situation demands that every patriotic person and every national political force, especially those who call themselves nationalists, sit at the negotiations table, regardless of party, organization or local links, in the name of a united Afghanistan, and in the name of the people of Afghanistan, members of one family, and search for ways to end hostility and war.

The Republic of Afghanistan has pursued its course on this great national matter in line with the teachings of the sacred religion of Islam and the traditions of the people of Afghan, and will continue to do so.

Therefore, I call on the people of Afghanistan, everywhere: Use your right and authority in choosing the future path of the country. At this critical stage, at the command of the common fate and precious experience of our ancesters, we should end this great problem and sorrow. Afghans have the capability and merit to come together in these difficult days and to jointly solve the problems of their common home. Help achieve a political and peaceful solution to the problem of Afghanistan, which guarantees the independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the country.

Leaders of tribes, representatives of tribes, and influential personalities of Afghanistan: Your share in the cessation of war in your areas is considerable. Do not allow military operations to be mounted from your areas against the people of Afghanistan. You who have the long-standing experience of your forefathers in the safeguarding of the independence, territorial integrity, and national sovereignty of the country, apply your vision and expertise to ensuring peace through a political and peaceful solution.

Patriotic clergy: The political and peaceful solution of the Afghan problem and all proposals of the Republic of Afghanistan for the cessation of war and the restoration of peace in the country are fully compatible with the teachings of the religion of Islam and the orders of God. Call on the people from the pulpits and mosques.

Your words—you serve the path of God's great prophet of Islam—enjoy special credit and influence among the Muslim people of the country. We expect that scholars, religious leaders, preachers, prayer leaders, and teachers of religious affairs will explain the harm and the suffering resulting from the continuation of war, the effects of which can be seen in our society, and invite the supporters of war to talk about peace.

Armed opposition commanders: Do you not know that as a result of the continuation of war, the features of most of the villages and localities have changed? Agricultural land, canals, farms and grazing lands are either transformed into battlefields or into scrubland. Thousands of our compatriots who should have worked and lived, have lost their lives as a result of the war. You are surrounded by orphans and widows. You have a responsibility before God and the people to end war in your regions, and to engage in agricultural, trade, and livestock work. Do this in your own interest and in the interest of the peoples of your regions.

Refugees who live away from home, you, who were wishing for peace in your country: Fortunately, conditions for peace have now been prepared. You should not allow your children to burn in the flames of war. At the moment, when the conditions for entrusting peace in Afghanistan have been prepared, there is no reason for you to remain in others' territories. You should return to your country and resume your peaceful life.

Regardless of how the forces, formations, and groups are thinking, the people of Afghanistan, who are a major factor, are optimistic about a peaceful, political solution to the issue of Afghanistan through unity [kenaramadan] among all, or a decisive majority of the political forces. From children, to youths, to elderly people, they all demand their rightful due, which is peace and an end to war. Currently under way, inside and outside the country, is a movement toward a peaceful and political solution to the issue of Afghanistan.

Therefore, once again we invite all the parties involved, leaders of formations, local commanders, and Afghan personalities, to coordinate your wishes with the wishes of the majority of [word indistinct] and take part in the process of a political and peaceful solution to the issue of the country.

The Republic of Afghanistan is ready to negotiate and exchange views with the leaders of formations, armed opposition commanders, and influential personalities on

the peace process, wherever they want, to seek methods and ways to a political and peaceful solution to the issue of Afghanistan within the framework of the statement by the UN secretary general. We are ready to negotiate and talk in order to obtain the satisfaction of Almighty God—may He be glorified—on the subject of ending the war among the Muslims, which is also the urgent need of the people of our country. We have no other purpose in this direction but to serve people and earn the satisfaction of Almighty God.

Dear compatriots: You are aware that a number of extremists opposed the statement made by His Excellency the UN secretary general on a political solution to the issue of Afghanistan, and revealed their antipeace faces. They lay in wait to harm and sabotage the process of a political and peaceful solution to the issue of the country. They should know that the armed forces of Afghanistan will not allow the warmongering forces to act against the national interests of the Afghanistan people. The experiences of the successful operations by our units and companies in Lowgar, Qandahar, Gardez, Ghazni, Herat, and in a number of other regions showed that the armed forces of Afghanistan have the ability to resist the extremist forces and the supporters of a military solution with firmness and steadfastness.

We will use all our efforts to ensure the noble cause of peace and to end war. At the same time we point out to all the people of Afghanistan, all political forces, the supporters of peace, and the armed forces of the Republic of Afghanistan, that the enemies of peace lay in wait. They should not be allowed to impose the continuation of war on our suffering people again.

Compatriots: In order to welcome the statement of His Excellency the UN secretary general in practice, the Republic of Afghanistan instructs all governors and state bodies to declare and observe a cease-fire if the commanders of the armed opposition agree. This cease-fire can be put into practice at the level of a governorate, district, subdistrict, or even a village.

To continue the diplomatic and political efforts made by a number of the Islamic and other countries, and of the goodwill that was expressed by them to mediate between the Republic of Afghanistan and the opposition, we once again express our readiness to accept and render any type of assistance to the mediation role of these countries and personalities, in order to seek a political and peaceful solution to the issue of Afghanisan within the framework of the UN plan.

We request that the neighboring countries, the Islamic nations, and other countries, not spare the necessary efforts to seek and accelerate the achievement of a political and peaceful solution to the issue of Afghanistan. The Republic of Afghanistan is ready to provide the necessary facilities to aid the implementation of the UN plan and the efforts of other countries and peace-loving personalities of the world in connection with a political and peaceful solution to the issue of Afghanistan.

Our aim from all these and other measures that will take place within the framework of the national reconciliation policy, is to end war and ensure peace in our suffering country, and to put an end to the great sorrow of the Afghans.

I have full confidence that with the help of Almight God, and the support of the peace-loving people of Afghanistan, we will come close to our aim and ensure peace in our homeland.

Success comes from God.

## India

### Cremation of Rajiv Gandhi in 24 May Ceremony

*BK2405133691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 24 May 91*

[Excerpt] The mortal remains of the former prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, have been confined to flames on the banks of Yamuna at Shakti Sthal in the capital. His son, Rahul Gandhi, lit the pyre at 1725 [1155 GMT]. Army buglers sounded the last post and guns boomed in salute to the late leader killed in an explosion on Tuesday night.

The president, vice president, prime minister, several heads of government and state and other leaders joined the thousands of mourners who thronged Shakti Sthal to pay their homage. Representatives of diplomatic missions, political leaders, and other dignitaries were also present at the cremation. "Rajiv Amar Rahe" [remain immortal] rent the air as the body was lifted from the gun carriage and placed on the pyre erected on a specially-built platform. Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, Priyanka, and Rahul were joined by relatives and family friends in the final preparation for the cremation amid recitation of hymns.

The funeral procession along the 10 km route through several central areas of the city took about four hours to reach the site from Teen Murti Bhavan. The GOC [General Officer Commanding] of Delhi area was ahead of the flower-bedecked gun carriage on which the body of the late leader draped in tricolor was placed. Thousands of people lined on either side of the road, despite scorching heat and showered flowers. At several places, crowds ran alongside the gun carriage trying to catch a last glimpse of their leader. It was a poignant scene with the daughter having a (?confident) arm around the mother. [passage omitted]

### Detained Tamil Believed Linked To Gandhi Killing

*BK2505045691 Hong Kong AFP in English 0412 GMT 25 May 91*

[Text] New Delhi, May 25 (AFP)—Police have detained a Sri Lankan Tamil militant in India's Tamil Nadu state on suspicion of being linked to former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, newspapers reported Saturday.

The suspect was identified as a member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), Sri Lanka's most powerful separatist group, which is believed to have carried out the suicide bombing that killed Mr. Gandhi Tuesday night.

THE TIMES OF INDIA and other newspapers said police were interrogating the militant, who had 10,000 rupees (500 dollars) and a cyanide capsule on him, for possible links with Mr. Gandhi's slaying in the Tamil Nadu town of Sriperumpudur.

LTTE guerrillas campaigning for an independent homeland in Sri Lanka's northeastern province are known to carry cyanide, which they often take to avoid capture.

The newspapers said the unnamed militant was caught near Vedaranyam, a coastal town in Tamil Nadu, which is separated from Sri Lanka by a narrow strip of sea called the Palk Straits.

No further details were available.

Mr. Gandhi, 47, died instantly at Sriperumpudur, near Tamil Nadu's capital Madras where he had gone to address an election rally, when a concealed plastic explosive reportedly carried by an unidentified woman went off.

At least one Indian federal minister has blamed the LTTE for the murder but the group has denied the charge.

Mr. Gandhi ordered thousands of Indian troops into Sri Lanka in 1987 to crush Tamil separatism. The Indians fought a bush war against the LTTE for about two years in which thousands were reportedly killed.

### Further on Tamil

*BK2505064691 Hong Kong AFP in English 0625 GMT 25 May 91*

[Excerpts] New Delhi, May 25 (AFP)—Indian police have detained a Sri Lankan Tamil militant on suspicion, amid conflicting reports Saturday about the involvement of Tamil guerrillas in former Premier Rajiv Gandhi's brutal assassination. [passage omitted]

He was identified as a member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), Sri Lanka's dominant Tamil separatist group which is widely believed to have carried out the suicide attack. [passage omitted]

Tamil Nadu police were quoted Saturday as saying that the needle of suspicion for the murder, which also killed 16 others, was pointing towards the powerful and highly committed LTTE.

One domestic news agency said the focus of investigation "has virtually narrowed down to the involvement of LTTE, not only because of the type of explosive used but also the manner in which the assassination was carried out."

Forensic experts said Friday that Mr. Gandhi, who was widely seen as the front runner in Indian general elections since postponed to June, was killed by a highly malleable plastic explosive used in military operations.

Newspapers on Saturday quoted police as saying that a woman suspected to have set off the explosive packed in a concealed waist belt "could have been a member of the suicide squad of the LTTE."

More newspapers have published two photographs, one of a young woman holding a garland in her hand and who is believed to have carried out the suicide attack, and one of her shattered body.

"The woman could have been living in Tamil Nadu for some time and used by the militants," a senior police official in Tamil Nadu said, adding that the features of the woman resembled those of a Sri Lankan woman.

Both the woman and Mr. Gandhi, who had flown to Sriperumpudur for an election meeting, took the maximum impact from the bomb which blew off parts of their bodies. [passage omitted]

### Sri Lankan Woman Detained

*BK2805050091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1812 GMT 27 May 91*

[Text] New Delhi, May 27 (AFP)—Police detained a Tamil woman from Sri Lanka in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu for questioning Monday for suspected involvement in the slaying of former Premier Rajiv Gandhi, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said.

The unnamed woman, aged 30, was picked up from the Cuddalore area in Tamil Nadu's south Arcot district.

PTI said the latest detention had led to speculation that she might have been an accomplice of another woman suspected by police to have assassinated Mr. Gandhi by triggering a bomb concealed on her person.

Several witnesses had confirmed the suspected assassin was seen in the company of another woman shortly before the blast killed Mr. Gandhi and some 16 more people, the agency.

Newspapers here said the investigators in Tamil Nadu had embalmed the body of the suspected assassin woman for preservation to help further investigations.

The body, which has not been claimed, has been placed under "strict vigilance" in police custody in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, where Mr. Gandhi was killed on May 21, the UNITED NEWS OF INDIA (UNI) said.

THE PATRIOT and other newspapers quoted a UNI report as saying that the unidentified woman's body would not be cremated but probably buried at a secret location to safeguard the skull. The body could be exhumed later if necessary.

A dark-skinned bespectacled woman, wearing Indian dress, is believed to have killed Mr. Gandhi, 46, with a highly malleable plastic explosive in the town of Sriperumpudur, near the Tamil Nadu capital Madras.

She reportedly set off the powerful bomb wired to her body while pretending to touch his feet as a mark of respect. Mr. Gandhi was at Sriperumpudur to address an election meeting.

News reports, citing security investigation leaks, have said the woman could be a member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), Sri Lanka's most powerful Tamil separatist group, which has denied the charge.

It has not been established whether the woman was an Indian or Sri Lankan, nor whether she was living in or visiting Tamil Nadu, a coastal state separated from Sri Lanka by a narrow strip of sea.

"The woman's neighbours, some shopkeepers or even public servants like postmen, who might have come in contact with her without knowing her, might give vital clues," the newspapers quoted well-informed sources as saying.

UNI, in another report, quoted official sources as saying that investigators do "not rule out the involvement of any terrorist group from any region," including separatists from India's Punjab state.

"The sources also did not rule out a possible nexus between two or more militant outfits," it added.

On Sunday, a newspaper reported here that a videotape of the last moments of Mr. Gandhi's life showed a "fourth woman" handing him a bouquet seconds before the explosion that killed him.

The SUNDAY OBSERVER said it had been privy to an exclusive screening of the video, which was confiscated by the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), India's intelligence agency.

UNI, in its report, said officials believed that the woman assassin could be a mercenary and might have committed the crime for money.

Officials have said that a great deal of planning appeared to have gone into the murder.

### LTTE Says Envoy Met Gandhi

*BK2805080691 Hong Kong AFP in English 0735 GMT 28 May 91*

[Excerpts] New Delhi, May 28 (AFP)—An envoy of Sri Lanka's dominant Tamil guerrilla group met Rajiv Gandhi before his assassination and so the rebels had no reason to kill the former Indian premier, a rebel spokesman was quoted as saying Tuesday.

Sathasivam Krishnakumar of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said the March 5 meeting between Mr. Gandhi and envoy Kasi Anandan had led to a "good relationship" between New Delhi and the Tigers, THE HINDU newspaper reported.

"Therefore, the LTTE had no reason to kill him," Mr. Krishnakumar told the Madras-based newspaper in a telephone interview from his London home.

The LTTE is seen as one of the key suspects in the assassination of Mr. Gandhi by a powerful explosive carried by a woman suspected of being a Sri Lankan. The LTTE has denied Killing Mr. Gandhi.

Mr. Krishnakumar, without blaming anyone else for the May 21 murder, also implicitly linked rival Tamil rebel groups and Colombo with Mr. Gandhi's slaying in Sriperumpudur town in India's Tamil Nadu state.

"The Sri Lankan Government was anxious about the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement being revived if Rajiv Gandhi were to return to power" in general elections now postponed to June, the daily quoted him as saying.

He added that the Indian Government had previously supplied "large quantities of plastic explosives" to all Sri Lankan Tamil groups and that other groups "did not get an opportunity to use them" in the battlefield. [passage omitted]

Mr. Krishnakumar said Mr. Gandhi had told Mr. Anandan at their 45-minute meeting that he would do whatever was possible to mitigate the hardships of Sri Lanka's minority Tamil community.

He added that the meeting, which remained unpublicized until the assassination, had the blessings of LTTE Supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran, who is directing the Tamil homeland campaign in Sri Lanka.

"As far as the LTTE is concerned, there is no justification for the LTTE to have inimical feelings towards Rajiv Gandhi," he added. "The LTTE has never interfered in the local politics of India.

"So there was no room for ... Rajiv Gandhi to entertain any inimical feelings towards the LTTE and vice versa. After the withdrawal of the IPKF, the relationship between Rajiv Gandhi and the LTTE was built step by step.

"Therefore, there cannot be any connection between the LTTE and this murder," he added, in the most exhaustive denial of the guerrilla group's links with the assassination.

Mr. Krishnakumar, who lost a leg in a grenade attack in March 1987, told THE HINDU that anyone could have killed Mr. Gandhi.

"Besides, when you look deeply at it, the Sri Lankan Government was worried that the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement (of 1987) would be revived if Rajiv Gandhi were to return to power," he said.

A Sri Lankan diplomat here brushed aside Mr. Krishnakumar's remarks, saying Colombo was all for the Indo-Sri Lanka accord which had sought to give autonomy to Tamils and disarm the guerrillas.

"This sort of statement will be made. I am not surprised," he said.

### Supreme Court Judge To Head Gandhi Death Probe

*BK2705124791 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 27 May 91*

[Text] A supreme court judge, Mr. Justice J.S. Verma, will head the commission which is to inquire into the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. A presidential notification to this effect was issued in New Delhi today. An official spokesman said that the inquiry will cover possible lapses on the part of those responsible for Mr. Gandhi's security. The commission is to submit its report to the government within three months. The law and justice minister, Dr. Subramaniam Swamy, told newsmen that the delay in announcing the inquiry commission was due to the reluctance of supreme court judges to head such a commission in view of criticism by certain politicians in the past.

The Bharatiya Janata Party has demanded that the government should make it clear that the report of the inquiry commission to probe the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi will be made public immediately after its submission and no part of it will be held back. Speaking to newsmen in New Delhi today, the party vice president, Mr. K.R. Malkani, also demanded an inquiry into the disturbances in Andhra Pradesh and said that the victims should be compensated.

### Videocassette Seized

*BK2505160891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 May 91*

[Text] The condition of Mrs. Margatham Chandrashekhar, who was wounded at the Sriperumbudur bomb blast, is stable. According to doctors attending on her, she needs close observation for a few more days. The condition of Mr. Pandiyan, a UCCI [United Communist Party of India] leader, and other police officials is however improving.

Meanwhile, a pair of spectacles found at the bomb blast site by the TNCC-I [Tamil Nadu Congress Committee-I] joint secretary, Mr. Jyoti, resembled those worn by the suspected assassin of Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Jyoti told the PTI [PRESS TRUST OF INDIA] in Madras today that he found the spectacles partially buried under the sand. This was handed over to the police.

According to the UNI [UNITED NEWS OF INDIA], a videocassette containing the entire sequence of events, including the bomb blast, has been seized by the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation]. The cassette might help in providing vital clues to the whole episode.

### Tamil Nadu Finds No Gap in Gandhi Security

*BK2505125291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 25 May 91*

[Excerpt] The Tamil Nadu Government has handed over the assassination case of the former prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, to the Central Bureau of Investigation. Talking to newsmen in Madras today, the state chief secretary, Mr. Anthony, said that none of the state government officials will speak to the press on the matter till the inquiry and the judicial process are complete.

Referring to the security arrangements for Rajiv Gandhi, Mr. Anthony said these were organized by a high-ranking police official and said that there was no lacuna in the arrangement. [passage omitted]

### Party Demands Governor Resign

*BK2505162091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 May 91*

[Text] The DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazagham] and its allies have demanded the resignation of the Tamil Nadu governor, Mr. Bhishma Narain Singh, for the security lapse which cost Rajiv Gandhi his life. In a resolution in Madras, they expressed the view that the security lapse was the prime reason which led to the bomb blast, killing Rajiv Gandhi instantaneously on Tuesday. They also called for the protection of life and property of their leaders and workers. Later, they took out a silent procession to express their anguish and agony over the assassination.

### Public Outcry for Deportation of Sri Lankan Tamils

*BK2605031491 Hong Kong AFP in English 0151 GMT 26 May 91*

[By M.R. Narayan Swamy]

[Text] New Delhi, May 26 (AFP)—Thousands of Sri Lankan Tamils are worried about their future in India following the shock assassination of former Premier Rajiv Gandhi by a woman suspected to be a Tamil militant.

Sri Lankans say the Tamils, almost all of them refugees, are keeping their fingers crossed after leading Indian politicians called for their repatriation to protest Mr. Gandhi's killing.

The Indian Government has not responded to the demands, and it is widely believed the calls would not be heeded. But relief workers say that has not eased the refugees' fears.

"There is a lot of apprehension (among refugees)," said S. Chandrahasan, a Sri Lankan Tamil in Madras, capital of the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, where the 46-year-old Gandhi was killed by a powerful bomb Tuesday.

The killing in Sriperumpudur town near Madras has been blamed on a young woman believed to be a Sri

Lankan woman who had plastic explosives wired to her body and who probably set them off while pretending to garland Mr. Gandhi.

News reports and one federal Indian minister have blamed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the dominant Tamil separatist group in Sri Lanka, for the suicide attack. The LTTE has refuted the charge.

Mr. Chandrahasan, who runs a refugee relief organisation, said in a telephone interview that the nearly 205,000 Sri Lankan Tamils residing in Tamil Nadu were "quite distressed that they might be sent back."

"They are shocked with what has happened and that people indulging in violence have not only ruined their lives in Sri Lanka, but also their lives as refugees," he added.

Mr. Gandhi's assassination sparked off widespread violence in coastal Tamil Nadu, home to 55 million Indian Tamils who have long sympathised with the cause of their Sri Lankan brethren across the narrow Palk Straits.

Though no Sri Lankan was assaulted in the Tamil Nadu violence, which left about a dozen people dead, it triggered calls for immediate repatriation of all the island Tamils from the state.

"I appeal, rather demand, that the centre should take immediate action to see that all Sri Lankan Tamils are sent back," said Jayalalitha Jayaram, leader of a powerful political party in Tamil Nadu.

"This (repatriation) should take place immediately" said Ms. Jayalalitha of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), tipped to take power in Tamil Nadu in elections next month.

Her statement came a day after K. Ramamurthy, president of the Tamil Nadu unit of Mr. Gandhi's Congress (I) Party which has an alliance with AIADMK, made a similar demand.

"Even a single person should not remain here, whoever it might be, because everybody comes in the guise of refugees," he said angrily in Madras. "Let them do all their nonsense in Eelam."

Eelam is the name given by Tamils to their proposed homeland.

Sri Lankan Tamils say they have been shocked by the statements, never made before in Tamil Nadu, one place where Tamils fleeing the strife-hit island have always felt at home because of common language and culture.

THE HINDU newspaper, published from Madras, said inmates of the sprawling Mandapam refugee camp in Ramanathapuram district did not dare go out following the Gandhi killing for fear of being attacked by Indians.

The daily added that most refugees were certain that the LTTE was involved, and that they felt guilty and ashamed.

Tamil sources reported similar fears, saying Sri Lankan refugees were worried that the Tamil Nadu citizens would become hostile—a development that some say has in any case been evident in recent years.

Some 115,000 Sri Lankans live in 230 refugee camps across Tamil Nadu, surviving on paltry doles including 150 rupees (7.5 dollars) for a family head, rice at 57 paise (less than three cents) a kilogram and subsidized food.

Another 90,000 Tamils, mostly middle-class and the rich, stay outside of camps, while some 1,000-1,500 members of various Tamil groups are also known to live and work in the state, many without legal documents.

Over the years, Sri Lankan Tamil militants have been blamed for violence, drug trafficking and prostitution in Tamil Nadu where 14 rival Tamil guerrillas were shot dead allegedly by the LTTE in June 1990.

Jayanthi Natarajan, a Congress (I) leader of Tamil Nadu who was with Mr. Gandhi when he was assassinated, said she was mobbed by supporters who demanded that all Sri Lankans be packed home.

"They were really angry," she said here. "I don't know whether their feelings will change in, say, 10 days from now. But as of today no one in Tamil Nadu wants them (Sri Lankan Tamils)."

Added Mr. Ramamurthy, in a separate interview: "It is better that they should go back to the country voluntarily. Otherwise our people will force this to happen."

The Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), an anti-LTTE Tamil group in Sri Lanka, has asked Indians not to vent their anger against the Tamils.

"It will be a travesty of justice and a violation of the memories of Mr. Gandhi if any show of anger against the LTTE is misdirected against the Tamil refugees who are now in Tamil Nadu," an EPRLF statement here friday said.

Sri Lankan Tamil militants were trained and harboured by India until New Delhi deployed thousands of troops in the island in mid- 1987 under an accord Mr. Gandhi signed with Colombo to end Tamil separatism.

The powerful LTTE refused to accept the accord, sparking a bloody war between its guerrillas and the Indian Army in which thousands died.

### Congress-I Leaders Say Gandhi Murder 'Conspiracy'

*BK2605161391 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 26 May 91*

[Text] A number of Congress-I leaders have described the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi as part of a large conspiracy against the nation. In a statement adopted at a meeting in New Delhi today, they said the country is facing the threat of communal and castist divisive forces besides the economic crisis. The assassination at this

juncture is a well-planned assault on the values and ideals of Indian national movement, they said.

### Congress-I Warns of 'Internal Emergency' Idea

*BK2705162191 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 28 May 91*

[Text] The Congress-I spokesman, Mr. Pranab Mukherji, says that consultations on the party leadership are continuing and the Working Committee will discuss the matter on Wednesday [29 May]. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, he said the transition of leadership will be stable and on the basis of consensus. About the leader of the party in parliament, he said it has been a practice to elect the leader only after a new Lok Sabha is constituted.

Replying to questions, Mr. Mukherji said any idea of imposing internal emergency at this juncture will have serious consequences. He said that the election process has already started and no one should be allowed to block it.

On realignment of political forces after the elections, he said the Congress-I will cooperate with those who are willing to fight communalist and castist forces.

### Shekhar Denies 'Emergency' Idea

*BK2805090391 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 28 May 91*

[Text] A Rashtrapati Bhavan [president's house] spokesman today denied that there was any mention of imposition of internal emergency in the talks between the prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, and the president, Mr. R. Venkataraman, yesterday. He described reports to this effect appearing in a section of the press as baseless.

The prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, has also described the report as totally absurd and mischievous. He said in New Delhi that there is no situation for declaring an emergency nor has anybody even thought of it at any stage. Mr. Chandra Shekhar said some people want to create a sense of instability in the country and their motives are not clear.

### Government Spokesman's Denial

*BK2805144891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 28 May 91*

[Text] The government today categorically stated it has no intention to impose internal emergency in the country. In a statement in New Delhi today, an official spokesman dismissed reports in this regard as totally unfounded and malicious. The spokesman said these emanated from antinational elements working against the integrity of the country. They are disappointed that the government acted firmly to put down attempts to disrupt law and order following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. Rashtrapati Bhavan [president's house] has also separately denied there was any mention of imposition of emergency during the meeting the prime minister had with Mr. Venkataraman yesterday.

### Election Commission Rules Out Change in Poll Dates

*BK2705160391 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 27 May 91*

[Text] The second and third phase of polling will be held as per the revised schedule on the 12th and 15th of next month. The Election Commission says the dates are firm and final. A press note issued by the commission in New Delhi this evening says there will be no further change in the poll program. The press note says the commission has taken the decision after carefully considering all representations for advancing the poll dates. There is no change in the existing poll schedule for Assam and Punjab also. While elections will be held in Assam on the sixth and eighth of next month, Punjab will go to the polls on the 22d.

Repolling in nearly 1,000 polling stations in seven states will be as scheduled on the 12th of next month. The repolls were ordered following reports of booth capturing and poll related irregularities in the first round of polling held on Monday last [20 May].

### Punjab Candidate Killed; Election Countermanded

*BK2705090291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 27 May 91*

[Text] In Punjab, election to one more assembly constituency has been countermanded. This follows the recovery of the dead body of the All India Sikh Students Federation-supported independent candidate, Mr. Inder Pal Singh, seeking election from (Keela Raipur) constituency of Ludhiana District today. AIR [All India Radio] Chandigarh correspondent reports that this raises the number of assembly constituencies where elections have so far been countermanded to 13. Election to 11 of these are being held along with the rest of the state under the fresh election program announced by the Election Commission.

### More Election Candidates Shot

*BK2805031691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0240 GMT 28 May 91*

[Text] In Punjab, elections to two more assembly constituencies of Malerkotla and Muktsar have been countermanded following the killing of two candidates. According to an official spokesman, two armed youths went to a petrol pump of Amritlal Goel in Malerkotla Town of Sangrur District and shot him dead last night. He was the candidate of Shiromani Akali Dal-Longowal from the constituency. In a similar incident, two armed scooter-borne youths shot dead an independent candidate, Jaswant Singh, seeking election from Muktsar constituency. Our Chandigarh correspondent reports that with this the number of assembly constituencies where elections have so far been countermanded has gone up to 15. However, in 11 of them the fresh election process has already started. Scrutiny will take place

today in six assembly constituencies in the state. The filing of nominations closed yesterday and the last date of withdrawal is Thursday. Polling will be held along with the rest of the state on the 22d of next month.

The Punjab unit of the CPI [Communist Party of India] has demanded the postponement of elections in the state by at least two weeks in view of the changed polling schedule in the rest of the country. The assistant secretary of the party's state unit said the security forces may not be able to reach Punjab well in time. He said the paramilitary forces should reach the state at least two weeks before the date of polling to ensure free and fair elections.

### Visiting Iranian Official Holds Meetings

*LD2605190791 Tehran IRNA in English 1517 GMT 26 May 91*

[Text] New Delhi, May 26, IRNA—The deputy president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 'Ata 'ollah Mohajerani and the caretaker Indian prime minister, Chandra Shekhar discussed bilateral relations and issues of mutual interest at a meeting held here Saturday. Both the leaders emphasised upon the need to increase economic, political and cultural relations between the two countries. Shekhar suggested that a joint commission be set up for identifying areas which necessitate enhancing of relations. During the meeting, Mohajerani offered condolences on behalf of the government and people of Iran at the assassination of former prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, and expressed hope that India would emerge stabler despite the tragedy.

Later in the day, the iranian deputy president had separate meetings with Soviet Vice President Mr. Yanayev and Pakistani Premier Nawaz Sharif. Yanayev told Mohajerani, that Moscow was seeking Tehran's support for the latest United Nations resolution on Afghanistan, which, he said, was acceptable to his country. The Mohajerani-Sharif meeting saw bilateral issues being discussed, as also the present situation in west Asia. Mohajerani, Yanayev and Sharif had come to Delhi to attend the funeral of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi who was brutally killed in a bomb blast at a place near Madras, in the southern part of India late Tuesday night.

Interviewed by irna before taking off for Tehran Friday night, Mohajerani called expansion of ties between countries like Iran and India "a lever helping stability in the region". He added that despite a three-year delay, the joint economic commission is to be held in the near future. Asked about an article published recently in an Indian newspaper saying that Iran might support Pakistan in case of a war with India, he stressed that Iran's friendly ties with Pakistan does not mean its opposition to a third country. However, he said, the plight of Muslims in India is among issues hindering expansion of Tehran-New Delhi ties.

During his two-day stay in India, Mohajerani held talks with ranking officials from several countries.

## Iran

### Hajj Pilgrims Begin To Depart for Saudi Arabia

*LD2705112591 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 27 May 91*

[Text] The departure of Iranian pilgrims to the holy shrine in Arabia started this morning. According to our correspondent, 115,000 Iranian pilgrims will depart from Tehran, Mashhad, Kerman, Tabriz, Shiraz, and Esfahan airports over the next 20 days to perform the hajj rituals in Arabia.

During the departure ceremonies of the first group of pilgrims from Tehran, Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Mohammadi Reyshahri, the representative of the supreme jurisconsult, and the supervisor of Iranian pilgrims, spoke. In the speech he praised the organizations and offices involved in the hajj organization, and he stressed the need of the authorities responsible for transporting the pilgrims to create facilities and welfare. Addressing the pilgrims of the holy shrine he also said: You dear pilgrims are the messengers of true Islam, the Abrahamite hajj, and the oppressed and uprisen people of Iran in the great hajj gathering. He expressed his hope that this year's hajj would be carried out in a way worthy of the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Furthermore, during those ceremonies Islamic Culture and Guidance Minister Khatami said: This year, we will perform the hajj rituals within the framework of the guidelines of the great leader of the Islamic Revolution, based on the clear guidelines of the honorable leader, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i. Expressing his hope for success for the representative of the supreme jurisconsult and the supervisor of Iranian pilgrims, he thanked all those involved in organizing the hajj.

### Velayati Interviewed on Foreign Policy

*NC2405202091 Tehran SORUSH in Persian 18 May 91 pp 6, 7*

["Exclusive" interview with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati by SORUSH correspondent Kiyumars Maleki in Tehran on 8 May]

[Excerpt] [Introductory passage omitted] [Maleki] Our country's diplomacy has been playing an ever more active role in recent years. This became even more pronounced after the crisis erupted in the region, particularly in the last two to three months. There are two schools of thought about this increased activity. One school believes that there is no need or benefit from political shuttle missions and contacts on this level and to this extent. The other school, which had criticized the political apparatus for its lack of dynamism and diplomatic efficiency, and which believed that we operated on

the basis of some outdated and unrealistic guidelines instead of a foreign policy, endorses this trend. Please tell us your opinion.

[Velayati] In the name of God. The international political scene provides the best platform for confronting various countries as well as for promoting cooperation among various countries. To put it more succinctly, the political scene is the best stage for confrontation, cooperation, and mutual assistance. Without a dynamic foreign policy, no country can have a serious and efficient political existence in the today's world. Diplomacy is not a way of passing one's time or a matter of choice; it is one of the most basic obligations of a government in today's world. Without an active foreign policy, without a calculated diplomacy, a government has no chance of continued existence, or at least an honorable existence.

The fact that our work was rather limited in the past and has now been expanded can be attributed to various factors, including our lack of experience. We expanded our activities as we gained more experience. The situation that existed in the past was partly due to the inexperience of those of us who work in the Foreign Ministry and the entire foreign policy apparatus, but it was also partly the product of the restrictions imposed on us by the conditions that prevailed at that time and the characteristics of our revolution.

The emergence and growth of a new system with new criteria based on divine ideology was not welcomed by the powers that dominate the world, and therefore they sought in various ways to prevent this system from standing on its own feet, especially in the political arena. One of the main reasons, therefore, for the restricted nature of our political moves, was the fact that this was imposed on us.

[Maleki] The past few days have witnessed visits by foreign ministers of the most important West European countries, Roland Dumas and Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the latter of whom left our country today (the day of the interview). What were the objectives of these visits and what are their most important results?

[Velayati] The most important result of Mr. Dumas' visit was the agreement on resolving our financial differences in a way that conforms with our principles. We can say that the protracted talks which took place during this visit bore fruit, and my colleagues in the Foreign Ministry reached certain agreements with their French counterparts while I reached agreement with French Government officials. The efforts of my colleagues in our Foreign Ministry and of their French counterparts paid off, and we attained positive and encouraging results. A definite understanding was reached and will, I hope, be announced in the next few days, God willing, if no problems crop up.

[Maleki] Can you give us any more information about the agreements?

[Velayati] We promised the esteemed French foreign minister that we would not divulge anything until all details are finalized.

[Maleki] Mr. Dumas made some side trips to various parts of our country. Was there any reason for these trips? Can you also elaborate on Mr. Genscher's visit?

[Velayati] Mr. Dumas visited Khuzestan to inspect an Iraqi refugee camp at first hand. He also went to Esfahan to visit the ancient sites in that city.

As regards the visit by Mr. Genscher and my visit to Germany, I should say that no [as published] serious, constructive, or frank issues were discussed between our two countries. Among the most important issues on which decisions were made during this trip are the expansion of Iran's cooperation with Germany; preparations for a meeting of the joint commission in Tehran in the next few weeks; and final agreement on matters connected with lags in various plans, such as that for Bushehr and the agrochemical plan for Qazvin, as well as the elimination of other bottlenecks or impasses.

God willing, now that the political decision has been made, this issue will be resolved during Mr. Moellemann's visit to Tehran. Our two countries also decided to continue to exchange views and to cooperate.

Germany's position on the region is very close to Iran's in many ways. For example, it believes that any regional security arrangements should be decided and implemented by the countries of the region and that foreign countries do not have the right to intervene in the region; this is our view exactly.

[Maleki] Were any decisions reached on the issue of the refugees and the form and scale of the assistance to be provided?

[Velayati] Germany and France are determined to continue their assistance to the refugees and to work with Iran to secure their safe return to Iraq. They did not give any figures, but they said they will continue their assistance.

[Maleki] Iran is currently the only country where the growing influence of the United States in the region cannot take root. Do you believe there is any difference or conflict between the European countries and the United States? If your answer is yes, then were these recent visits evidence of West Europe's desire for greater closeness with Iran?

[Velayati] The most optimistic view we can take is that even friendly countries have some sort of rivalry. If this is the case, then it is natural for us to expect that they are each pursuing their own interests. Only when there is a common enemy do their strategic interests demand that they shelve their differences and rivalries.

At one time communism was the common enemy of the Westerners, but this is not the case now. There is no Warsaw Pact and NATO has lost much of its strength, as NATO's European members have lost much of their

former motivation, even if they do not admit it. We can say that we are witnessing growing rivalry among the world's industrial powers for various reasons. The differences we perceive in their policies stem from differences in their interests, and they are vying with one another to extract the maximum benefit for their own countries.

[Maleki] What role can Iran play in this rivalry? Are we seeking to gain benefits for our national interests from these differences in interests?

[Velayati] Iran has an independent role and our nation and the Iranian leadership have laid the foundations of our foreign policy on independence, but this does not imply that we should use this factor for maneuvering between various powers. No. Independence is the greatest benefit of our revolution on the international level, just as it is on the national and the Islamic-national levels. As is only natural, this independence brings with it other benefits. Of course, our persistent pursuit of independence also resulted in pressure being exerted on us, as was the case in the past. In any event, we have to withstand this pressure for the sake of our strategic interests. The fact that more than 12 years have passed since the victory of the revolution proves that if the people have patience, fortitude, and the will to resist, they will definitely reap the fruit of their resistance.